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GENTLEMAN
INSTRUCTED
In the Conduct of a
VIRTUOUS and HAPPY
L I F E.

Written for the
INSTRUCTION of a YOUNG
NOBLEMAN.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N :
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558
19



The Publisher to the *Gentry.*

Gentlemen,

PROvidence having put the following Dialogues into my Hands ; I take the Boldness to offer 'em to the View of the Publick under your Protection. They were only intended by the Author for the private Instruction of a Young Nobleman ; on whom they have wrought such admirable Effects, that its Pity (methinks) to bury 'em in Privacy, and to confine 'em to one Closet. The Author's Design is charitable (I am sure) but whether he has been happy in the Execution, I wholly leave to your Judgments. He runs through the Duty of a Gentleman and of a Christian ; he points at the shortest Way to *Greatness* and *Goodness*, and furnishes you with Materials to live with *Honour* in this World, and in *Glory* in the next.

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The Publisher to the

Seeing therefore this little Treatise comes on so kind an Errand, it will (I presume) meet with a *Civil Reception*: For Messengers of *good News* are seldom unwelcome.

But nothing has emboldened me so much to cast these few *Pages* at your Feet, as a sincere Tenderness for your Persons. It's Wisdom to have an *Antidote* at Hand when we suspect Poison, and dangerous to visit a Pest-house without a *Preservative*. Alas, Gentlemen, you suck in Poison, you live in Infection; *Wealth*, *Grandure*, and *Example* plot your Ruin, and Flattery disguises the Danger; Lewd Books are of the Cabal, they dart Poison to the Heart through the Avenues of the Eyes, and convey Death through Pleasure.

In St. Peter's Days the Devil made his Round to prey on the Unwary; but now he has almost eased himself of that Labour; he acts no more in Person but by Deputy; he has commission'd *Poets* to *Rhime* you into Destruction, and fees *Libertines* to argue you



G E N T R Y.

you into Hell ; and certainly he has had greater Success against Mankind under the Shape of an Author, than of a Lion ; your Closets are stockt with defaming *Lampoons*, lewd *Plays*, and scandalous *Poems* ; you read these hellish Papers with Pleasure and Transport ; they soften Nature, emasculate the Mind, and by Degrees metamorphose the Reader into as errant a Beast as the Poet ; the Stile charms, the Expression is luscious, and the Contrivance no less inviting than the Subject. All these petty Artifices conspire to enflame Sense, to enliven Passion, and debauch the Will.

Again, to whet Appetite, and increase Desire, Care is taken to set off Ladies with all the Allurements of Easiness and Condescendency ; they are discarded not only of Modesty, but of Shame ; so that, if the Originals resemble the Copies, if the Sex be as ill prepared for Defence at home, as on the Stage, the Conquest will be made without the Expence of *Artillery* or *Bombs*.

The Publisher to the

But this is not enough ; the Poets take upon 'em the Office of Engineers too ; they trace out the Approaches, point the Cannon, order the Attack, and then cry, *Gentlemen, fall on.* For why do they expose not only to the Eyes in the Play-house, but in Print past Brutalities, but to persuade you to act 'em over again ? And why do they enter upon Particulars, but to shew you the Method ? They ransack *Mulberry Garden*, *Epsom Wells*, and other publick Scenes of Debauchery, for the Subject of your Entertainment ; their Plots and Counterplots are only layd to trapan Women, and gull Heiresses ; besides, few licentious Intrigues miscarry. This is a fly *Innuendo* to the Audience and the Reader, that Success will certainly wait upon their Attempts, and by Consequence it's a strong Provocation to enter upon Action.

And because Nature has stamp'd on the Face of Vice, Deformity and Horror, these ungrateful Features are shaded with charming Appellations, the

Sir

G E N T R Y.

Sin lies out of Sight under a Varnish, and nothing appears but the Pleasure. For this Reason the most overt Invitations to Evil must be Christen'd, *Billets doux*, *Lewdness* must be stiled *Gallantry*, and the *Stewes* Places of *Diversion*. Why are innocent Names put on criminal Things, but to confound Nations? but to gild over Dishonesty, (as Apothecaries do Pills) that it may go down without any Checks or Convulsions of Conscience?

Seeing you thus closely besieged on all sides, and standing on the Brink of Destruction; and (what is worse) void of Fear, nay, lulled into a mortal Letthargy, without any Apprehension of your Danger; I have brought these Dialogues to your Rescue, and may assure you with some Confidence, they'll prove most useful and highly beneficial, if you will vouchsafe to peruse 'em with unprejudiced Minds and unbiass'd Affections.

They lay before your Eyes the most important Parts of your Duty both to

The Publisher to the

God and Men ; the Snares of the World, and Wilds of the Devil ; the Causes of your Miscarriage, and sure Methods either to prevent or retrieve 'em ; and what can you desire more, but a sincere Resolution to apply these Remedies that are prescribed ?

I am sensible we live in an Age devoted to Censure and Criticism ; and therefore I have thought fit to obviate an *Objection* or two. Some may think the Author treats Quality with too much Freedom, and Nobility with too little Respect : But, Gentlemen, pray remember, there is a great Difference between your *Persons* and your *Vices* ; these be honours, not those.

It were ridiculous to Compliment Criminals, or to Reverence Felons on the Hurdle ; your Failures are brought upon the Scaffold, not for Triumph, but for Execution ; to receive Punishment, not Applause ; what Wonder then if he handles rusly those Faults he condemns ? If he tears off the Vizors that conceal a loathsome Deformity

G E N T R Y.

mity under a false but tempting Superficies? He has a mind to disowneance Ill, to withdraw you from the Embraces of these treacherous Syrens, that enchant your Reason, and captivate your Affections in order to murder your Souls; that offer you imaginary Pleasures, to reward your Credulity with real Torments. This is certainly a charitable Design, but withal impracticable, unless each Vice be haled to the Bar, and all their *Treasons, Forgeries and Impostures* be brought to Light, and proved upon 'em as clear as the Day.

For, Gentlemen, (give me leave to speak freely) you love Vice under the Mask of Pleasure, almost to dotage; nothing can wean your Affections from its bewitching Charms, but a Demonstration that you are most wretchedly imposed upon.

Others may perchance take it ill that the Author sports sometimes upon too serious a Subject, and by Consequence transgresses the Rules of Decency.

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The Publisher to the

But you must consider, we live in an Age that ranks Seriousness among the Vices, and Raillery among the Virtues. Alas, Gentlemen, the *Sportive Faculty* takes Place of the *Reasonable* ; *Risibile* and *Rationale* have changed Places since *Aristotle's* Days ; the Propriety has stept into the Definition of Man, and banish'd his most essential Ingredient among the Accidents. Reason without Force is out of Fashion ; it must appear in a *Scaramouche's* Dress to obtain an Audience, and must bring Delight as well as Instruction, to be welcome.

The Author condescends to your Weakness ; and surely you will not censure his Civility, nor burlesque his Judgment, for paying Deference to your Quality : Besides, he is sensible, Vice has been laught into Practice and Reputation, and Virtue into Contempt. Why therefore may not Virtue regain its Post by the same Method it lost it ? And why may not the Gentry be sported into their Duty, as they have been

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G E N T R Y.

rallied out of it? Some Poisons call for *Treacle*, others for *Fire*: But that of the *Tarantula* must be fetch'd out by *Musick*. A Peal of *Laughter* enervates the Force of this *Neapolitan* *Venom*, and a Brace of *Minuets* expells it. Who knows but your *Distemper* is of the same *Nature*? At least desperate *Diseases* are proper for *Experiments*; and though no *Remedy* succeed, its a *Satisfaction* to have applied all.

In fine, I fling this small Book at your Feet, and if you will be pleased to peruse it with *Leisure* and *Reflection*, it may not only furnish you with *Instruction*, but with *Pleasure*; not such, indeed, as courts *Sense*, and gratifies the *beastial* part, but such as is proportioned to the supreme and leading *Faculty*, such as feast a *Soul*, and regales an *Intelligence*.

Your most Ob. Servant,

L. T. D.

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The Preface.

GIVE me Leave, Dear Reader, to usher in the following Conferences with a Character of the Author. He is dead, and by Consequence out of the Reach of Vanity. And as the Regularity of his Life gives no hold to Satyr, so the Excellency of his Virtues raise him above Flattery. Many Reasons persuade me to conceal his Name; but more to publish his rare Merits.

Example has strange Attractives; the Way to Virtue by Precepts (as the Philosopher notes) is long, but by Example short and easie: Like the Laconick Dialect it expresses much in a little, and drives Arguments more home than Logick or Rhetorick. Seeing therefore, Gentlemen have continually before their Eyes so many Statues of Vice in all Postures, it's time to present 'em with one of Virtue, that they may be convinc'd, Pie-

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The P R E F A C E.

ty is within their Reach, as well as within their Obligation; and that they may live within the Circle of their Duty, without stepping out of the World, or debarring themselves the Freedom of Society and Conversation.

And, indeed, the Life of this Gentleman is a plain and standing Evidence, that Men transform Palaces into Places of Debauchery, not Palaces Men into Debauchees; and that Courts would be innocent, if Courtiers could resolve to remain so.

Eusebius was of a Family as ancient as the Conquest; and, what is particular in all the Civil Wars and Revolutions of State, his Ancestors were so happy, as to stand by their Prince in Spight of Faction and Interest, nor could they ever be prevailed upon to part with their Loyalty for any Prospect of Preferment. They chose rather to fall in the Defence of Justice, than to triumph with prosperous Usurpers.

Eusebius had the good Fortune to be born of a Mother, whose Wisdom vied with her Piety, and both, indeed, were

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The PREFACE.

extraordinary. She trained him up from the Cradle in the Duties of a Christian ; and I may say, he both loved God, and feared him, so soon as he was able to frame a right Notion of his Perfection : And these first Impressions sunk so deep, that neither Age nor Employments were able to wear 'em off.

He was sent to the University under the Conduct of a prudent Governor, who endeavour'd by Precept and Example to improve in him those Seeds of Virtue his Mother had sowed so early. He applied himself to Philosophy with Eagerness and Appetite, and made a Progress answerable to his piercing Wit and assiduous Application : yet he always lookt on Learning as the Accessory, and Piety as the Principal : That (he said) was a meer Embelishment, this an indispensable Duty : So that in Reality this was his Business, that his Diversion.

Yet he was none of those Plodders, who seem to disband from Company, and to forswear Conversation ; who place Virtue in Sowerness, and confound Piety with Spleen.

No;

The P R E F A C E.

No ; he was free, easie, and cheerful, and never refused to partake of those Sports that recreate the Mind, and ease the Body, without Prejudice to Conscience. To pawn Innocence for Pleasure, (said he) is to over-rate the one, and to under-value the other. To laugh whilst we sin, is (in some Sort) to renew the barbarous Cruelty of Nero, who play'd while Rome burned ; or the foolish Temerity of the Indian Philosopher, who fung on the funeral Pile.

Indeed, such an unusual Conduct was gazed at, in a Place, where Youth gives more time to the Practice of Epicurus's Morals, than to the Study of Aristotle's Philosophy ; or where at least Learning is more a la mode than Piety ; but this Admiration soon pass'd into Esteem, and he who at first was look'd on as a Monster, in Process of time was stiled an Angel.

He left the University to visit the Camp, and made several Campagnes under N. N. Neither Interest nor Ambition called him into the Field ; the only Aim of his Resolution was to learn the Mysteries of War,

The P R E F A C E.

War, that he might be one Day in a Capacity to serve his Prince with Honour, and his Country with Success.

Piety seldom follows an Army. Soldiers seem to leave Conscience in their Winter-Quarters, as well as Religion, that they may sin without Check, and be damned without Apprehension. Eusebius disapproved this ill Husbandry. Our Care (said he) must rise with the Danger; and seeing we are not assured of an Hour, it's Madness to neglect our Soul one Moment. I suppose, (continued he to a Friend) when we put on a Red Coat, we put not off Christianity, nor receive a Commission from God to live at Pleasure, when we enter into the Service of our Prince; no, no; let us die like Men, but live like Christians; this is the only Way to leave an honourable Memory in this World, and to find a glorious Reception in the next.

His Life in the Camp was answerable to his Principles, he prayed half an Hour on his Knees Morning and Evening, and never omitted to be present at publick Prayers;

The P R E F A C E.

Prayers ; when he was not on Duty, he would never suffer either prophane or obscene Discourse. For (said he) it's hard to hear without Sin those things that can't be spoke without Offence ; to permit Crimes, is to abet 'em. When he could not excuse an Officer's Fault, he always lessen'd it ; and spoke ill of no Body but himself. He compared Detractors to your Italian Bravoes, who attack People behind, and stab Bodies at unawares, whilst those kill a Man's Reputation.

One Day an Officer told him, War called for Courage, not Virtue ; that Resolution carried the Day, not Conscience.

That is (replied he) Ambition challenges the time of War, Diversion the time of Peace, and Sin every Moment of your Life ; but then who will claim the Moment of your Death ? God ! Alas, Sir, you'll neither have the time nor the Thought to dispose of it so advantagiously ; as you live in Sin, so in ali Probability you'll die in It.

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The P R E F A C E.

You are mistaken, Sir ; Sin enervates the Mind, not Piety ; and could we read the Thoughts of our Soldiers, we should find too little Conscience drove more of 'em out of the Field at the Battle of N. than too much. A Man must be either an Atheist, or mad, to front Danger in Sin.

Eusebius proved beyond Demonstration that Virtue is no Enemy to Valour ; he breathed nothing but Sieges, Battels and Expeditions ; he went to Combats with as composed a Countenance, as others march to Triumphs ; and, like Hannibal, was the first in the Field, and the last out of it ; he generally ask'd the most dangerous Post, and sought Perils, as if he had a mind to fall, yet he always came off with Safety and Applause ; Providence seemed to have made him Proof against Ball and Sword, and his Virtue armed him against Fear.

Being challenged once to a Duel, he answer'd coldly, Sir, though I fear not your Sword, I tremble at my Maker's Anger ; I dare venture my Life in a good

The P R E F A C E.

good Cause, but cannot hazard my Soul in a bad one. I'll charge up to the Cannon's Mouth, but want Courage to storm Hell. *And when a Friend told him, he must either Fight, or forfeit his Honour.* You are mistaken, (*replied Eusebius*) I'll gain Honour by my Disgrace, and shew the World I am no Coward, by daring censure and obloquy. He is courageous and brave, who stands up for Conscience against the false but prevailing Maxims of Custom and Opinion, not he, who betrays his Duty, and dreads more an imaginary Imputation, than a real Crime. *Eusebius returned from the Army with Glory, and brought off his Piety in Triumph.* He was received by his Master with open Arms, and advanc'd to an honourable Post. He labour'd for his Benefactor's Interest, not his own; and used to say, The Prince should always carry off the Profit, and the Subject the Glory of doing well.

He could not endure to purchase Attendants with fair Promises, and then to re-

The P R E F A C E.

reward their Expectation with Disappointment. His Intentions were as sincere as his Words, and he never promised a Favour, but he design'd it. He could not endure to tantalize Pretendents with gay Hopes, and in the End dismiss 'em with an airy Compliment. This is (said he) to spend their time, and drain their Purse with insignificant Waiting, to tempt their Patience, and in the End to draw 'em to be your Enemies.

Eusebius found at last, that Innocence is not above the reach of Envy, and that in Courts Virtue is often punish'd, and Vice rewarded. A Club of Courtiers cabal'd against him, and persuaded the Prince to discard him. He bore this Disgrace with an Evenness of Temper, that surprized his Enemies, and, like the Sun in an Eclypse, all gazed on him with Admiration. Though he was overpower'd, he could not be overcome. He look'd brighter under a Cloud, than in the full Meridian of his Grandure, and all concluded he was no less in Misfortune, than he had been in the highest Splendor of Glory.

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The P R E F A C E.

A Friend tempted him to strike in with a Faction against his Prince ; but he received the Proposition with Indignation and Horror. No, (said he) I had rather be wretched without a Fault, than great with a Crime : Duty call'd me to my Master's Service, not Interest ; and I'll rather pawn my Life, than forfeit my Loyalty ; my high Pretensions lie in the other World, not in this ; my Prince rais'd me to a considerable Fortune, now he thinks fit to discharge me, I'll thank him for the Favour, and not repine at his Justice. I accepted the Station at his Command with Gratitude, and I quit it with Resignation.

He was received again into Favour ; yet this unexpected Turn wrought no Alteration in his Humour ; he rose with the same Unconcernedness he fell ; he was above the Charms of Prosperity, and Proof against the Stroke of Adversity ; neither good Fortune puft him up, nor bad deppress'd him ; he never thought of Revenging those Affronts he had received from his Rivals, but us'd his Power with Moderation,

The P R E F A C E.

deration, and returned Civility for Un-kindness.

He retired at the Revolution from Business, and gave himself wholly to the Practice of Virtue; he was advanc'd in Years, and resolv'd to devote the Remainder of his Days to Eternity. I may die soon (said he) but can't live long; its Prudence therefore to manage every Moment as the last, because it may be so. He discharged his Debts immediately, saying, this was too pressing and too important a Business, to be trusted to an Hours Integrity, that many suffer in the next World for a Successor's Neglect in this.

One that lived so well, could not die ill; for every Man's Death is a Copy of his Life, and exactly resembles the Original. In his last Sickness he shew'd all the Bravery of a Soldier, and all the Piety of a Christian; he bore the Dolors of his Distemper not only with Patience, but Transport, and look'd Death in the Face with the same Undauntedness he often beheld the Enemy in Battel. Sir, (said he

The P R E F A C E.

be to his Nephew standing) remember you are born to the same Fate, you may read your Destiny in mine ; you will once be in the same Circumstances you see me ; you know not when you must take the last Farewel of Life ; Death steals upon us like a Thief, and strikes without Noise, without Warning : Seeing therefore you are never secure, be always prepared, leave nothing to Chance or Hazard ; a Surprize is possible, and (what is worse) irreparable. Never pretend to show your Wit by disputing Principles, nor think you own your Reason most, when you least own your Faith. This is to place Wit in Folly, and Reason in Impiety. Practice Virtue, this is your only Business, it will make you content in this World, and open a fair Prospect of Felicity to the next.

His Words seem'd tipt with Fire, they pierced the Hearts of all that were present, and warmed their Affections ; whilst all mourned, he alone was joyful. In fine, recommending his Soul to the Mercy of his

The P R E F A C E.

his Redeemer, he gently expired, leaving behind a Pattern for Gentlemen's Imitation. Thus died Eusebius a Scholar, Soldier, and Courtier, and in all these States a Saint.

Let Gentlemen learn by this Example, they may be Great and Good ; and that they may discharge themselves with Glory of all the Offices of Society, without betraying the Duty of a Christian.



A

Gentleman Instructed, &c.

DIALOGUE I.

Neander *a Young Gentleman* desires Eusebius *to instruct him in the Duty of a Gentleman.*

Eusebius.

Welcome Dear Neander : What fair Wind has blown me the Favour of so early a Visit ? This is extraordinary.

Neander. Pray ; Why so ? my Business has been up and abroad, these two Hours ; is it not high time to follow it ?

Euf. Ay ! But our Town Sparks have something of the *Owl*, they rise at Night, and lie down in the Morning. They observe a most exact Symmetry in disorder, and like *Lobsters* go backwards ; in a word,

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they turn Nature Topsy-turvie, or read it backwards: Its Gentile and Modish to out-sleep the Sun, and an Argument of Peasantry to do like other Men.

Nean. I have left the College too lately to be acquainted with the Customs of the Town: I have not open'd the *Ceremonial*, nor perused the *Ritual ala mode*: Yet methinks, to turn Night into Day is an odd Metamorphosis: Nature (sure) never intended Eyes for Darkness: Gloe-worms indeed are obliged to Night, it sets 'em off, and makes their faint Lustre sparkle with more *eclat*. But why Men should dote on Shades, and range in Obscurity, I can't Divine, unless they long to duel with Posts and try a Rubber at Loggerheads; in short, its a Battish Humour, and jars with my Constitution.

Euf. For all that, you must take up with Night; and be reconcil'd to Darkness, if you intend to stand fair with our own Town Sparks; they are of the Family of *Magara* true Sons of Night and *Erebus*. Light strikes too hard on their Eyes, it dazles 'em like *Opium*: It even works on the Brain and stu-pifies; but then, towards the Evening they return to themselves, and adjourn to the Tavern, and from thence sally out upon the Watch, and manfully storm Glasswindows

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In fine, Their Business and Reason sleep in the day and, rise when Wise Men go to Bed.

Now I suppose you intend to enter into the Confraternity, you'll not want most kind Invitations : These Blades lie on the Catch ; and place Sentinels on *Oxford Road* to give Notice when a Price draws near ; that is, when a Gentleman leaves the College ; and then they fly to the Innocent Youth like Eagles to the Quarry ; they proffer their Service, admire his Parts, Compliment him into Snares, wheedle him into Debauchery, Empty his Pockets, Wound his Soul, Stab his Reputation ; and when they have Martyr'd his Innocence, and Imbezzled his Estate, kick him out of their Company, and so exit the Young Squire.

Nean. A Man (I see) must carry his Wits about him at *London* ; he must stand on his Guard to prevent a Surprize, and suspect Friends, not to be over-reach'd by Enemies. Like the Lion he must sleep with his Eyes open : Well ; a danger foreseen is half avoid-ed. *Eusebius*, I have been disordered since my arrival, and thought last Night more Hours, than I slept Minutes.

Euseb. What ! Are you smitten so soon ? Some Female Beauty has (I suppose) storm'd your Heart, and Good-Nature has beat the

4 *A Gentleman instructed, &c.*

Chamade. The Articles are (no doubt) drawn up and Signed ; unless perchance you resolve to surrender at Discretion : But in good earnest, Has Liberty given you a Surfeit ? Has Freedom gall'd you ? Will you try how neatly you can dance in Fetter'd, and caper in Trammels ? This is a Sample of University Breeding ; your Collegians are a pack of awkward Animals, full of Wit, but without Judgment to manage it ; one would think they studied not to grow Wise, but Fools ; to lose their Reason, or to forget the Use of it. They no sooner enter into the World, but, like Children, they chace every Butterfly, and run on the Spur to their Ruin. Ah; Dear *Neander* ! take Care ; a precipitate Choice makes way for a long Repentance ; stifle the first Sparks of Love, time will quickly Fan 'em into a Flame ; a green Wound is easily healed, but a festered One ends in a Gangreen.

Nean. Under Favour, you run riot on a falfe Conjecture. I am not Heart-Sick, but Town-Sick.

Euseb. Town-Sick ! This is, without per-adventure, an Outlandish Distemper ; there is not one *Receive* for it in our *London Dispensatory* : However, the Disease is not dangerous, for I find no mention of it in our Weekly Bills of Mortality ; in what Mould for

for God's Sake were you cast? Surely you are of some more refined, more Celestial Temper, than other Gentlemen, without Sense, without Passion; in fine, all Angel; all Seraphin.

Nean. Not so neither.

Euseb. What then?

Nean. Why Sir? I am a Man, subject to all the Infirmities of Human Nature; but I would not willingly surrender my Reason, nor quit the Privilege of Nature; I would not throw up my Claim to Heaven for any earthly Pretension: In fine, I have no Inclination to go to Grass with *Nebuchadonozar*; nor to lie in the same Bed with Brutes. I am a Man by Nature, and a Christian by Grace, and would neither debar my Reason, nor throw a Scandal upon my Profession: In a Word, I'll save my Soul.

Euseb. *Neander,* Let me embrace thee; I was just lighting a Candle (as *Diogenes* did at *Athens*) to find a Man in *London*. I thought Piety had taken leave of our Nation, and that Christianity had flown over to the Continent; but, God be thank'd, we have left among us one Man, and one Christian; so that the whole Species is not extinct. We live in a mad World, without Method, without Order; we seem to play at *Croſſe Questions*: Virtue and Vice have changed

Places, and almost Names, and even Wit is confounded with Folly ; Reason consists no more in the Use, but in the Abuse of it. Gentlemen debauch themselves into Credit, and draw Fame from Impiety ; the whole Business of Christians lies in confuting their Belief by their Practice : These monstrous Irregularities have (more than once) moved me to suspect, that the most Wise, and Thinking part of Mankind is coop'd up in *Bedlam*, whilst Mad-men and Fools range about the Town in Coaches.

This Man whines away at a *Strumpet's* Feet, his Estate, his Health, and his Soul too ; another drowns his Reason in *Claret* and *Canary*, he plays the Brute all the Week, and rises a Man on *Sunday Morning* : A Third delivers himself up to his Palate, and condemns his Wit to drudge for his Gluttony ; he judges of Meats by the Price, not by the Tast ; and those only regale his Appetite, that drain his Purse ; his Study is to provoke Hunger, not to lay it, and seldom rises from the Table, till a Surfeit forces him to call for a *Bacon*.

A Fourth has perchance received the *Lie* *vv* and in a Huff hauls out for Satisfaction, (i. e.) *Kn* a *Strab* ; the Stage is prepared, and up the *ess* *Hectors* jump with drawn Swords, (like the *his* *Roman Slaves*) to give Diversion to the *Spe* *on* *l* *ctators*

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stators: If this be not Folly and Madness without Masque or Disguise, pray give me their Definition; its hard to determine whether this Conduct be a fitter Object for *Heraclitus's Tears*, or *Democritus's Laughter*; its a Compound of Farce and Tragedy, but a Vein of Folly runs throughout the whole Mass.

Religion keeps pace with our Reason, and is just regarded as much. Methinks our Worship smells something of Paganism, for we adore God (as the Heathens did *Hercules*) with Showers of Stones and Brick-bats, (*Viz.*) of Oaths and Blasphemies; this is the only Homage we think fit to pay our Maker; and indeed it is a kind of Recognition, and is so far commendable, as it puts us in Mind there is such a thing to believe in, and to pray to, as well as to swear by. Now why we should be so sparing of our Prayers is a hard Question.

Some may perchance imagine the Posture of a Suppliant is below an *English* Courage; besides, its an uneasie Figure, and argues much Want or great Covetousness, two heavy Imputations for a Gentleman; moreover, Kneeling is a Mark of Subjection and Baseness; for I was once told, that a Yeoman onke the his Legs was taller and greater than a Prince Spe on his Knees: This is a rough Draught of

our Town Wit and Religion, without one dash of Satyr or Hyperbole : They are both at a low Ebb, and God knows when the Tide will turn. *Neander*, stand on your Guard, and look to your Conscience, as well as to your Purse ; for I assure you, the one is in less Danger than the other ; unless you carry a watchful Eye over your Thoughts and Actions, you will fall into Snares that are laid to entrap Innocence.

Neand. However, Surely God has not tied up our Duty to Impossibilities ; he tells us, his Yoke is easie and his Burthen light ; and then assures us by the Mouth of his Apostle, that our Power is always equal at least to the Temptation ; we may therefore discharge our selves of all the Offices of Life and Conversation, without overlooking the Duty of a Christian ; for certainly God never framed our Tongue for Silence, nor our Reason for Solitude ; we may handle 'em both *right*, as well as *wrong*, and employ 'em to a good Use, no less than to an ill one. I hope there is no necessity of sailing into *Egypt*, and of taking up in the Wilderness of *Thebais*, nor of running ito a *Convent*, or of receiving Holy Orders at *Rome* ; for though these Good Fathers may walk pretty securely to Heaven, yet I understand they make the Voyage alone : Now I feel no Charms in *Celibacy* ; and

and besides, they are by Law disfized not only of their Birthright, but even of the Benefit of the Clergy; so that they can claim no Liberty but that of the Prison, no Property but the Gallows. I have no Inclination to fling up my Estate, and as little to lay it at the Mercy of Greedy Favourites; nor to fly to Heaven by the way of *Tiburn*: I would not withdraw from Society, nor forswear Company, nor (like old *Timon*) disband from my own Species.

Euseb. You have Reason; God condemns us not, as *Pharaoh*, to the Drudgery of making Bricks without furnishing us with Materials; he proportions his Grace to our Wants, and never commands us to fight on unequal Terms; the Advantage lies on our side, and if we give our Adversary the higher Ground, our Defeat must lie at our own Door; we may be over-come, but can't be over-powered; our Cowardise gives Temptation the day, not our Weakness.

Besides, Virtue is not confin'd to Place or Condition; it may be practised in Towns as well as in Desarts; and no less by Courtiers, than Peasants: nay it shines (methinks) in a Palace, like the Sun in the Meridian, with Pomp and Majesty; for what can even Fancy paint more Charming and more Glorious, than Grandees neither abject in Ad-
versity,

verity, nor insolent in Prosperity ; than
Courtiers peaceable in the noise of Affairs,
Temperate in the midst of Excess, unchange-
able in Vicissitudes, and constant in all the
turns of Fortune ; untainted with Lusts,
composed in Tumults, and smiling at all
those things, that are either expected or
feared by others ; than Men who have the
Power to do what they will, and the Will
to do nothing but what is just and reasona-
ble ? This is no Platonick but a Christian
Virtue ; it is not only found in Fiction and
Romance, but has been commended to Pra-
ctice ; it has appeared more than once on
our *Horizon*, supported by Dignity, and wait-
ed on by all the Magnificence of Power and
Royalty : You may therefore hold your E-
state without flinging up your Title to Hea-
ven.

Nean. Indeed had Providence cut off my
Claim to Heaven, when it entrusted me with
a *Lordship*, I should have been no Gainer by
the Blessing ; notwithstanding though Virtue
be in my Power, if Vice be in my Will, I
shall, without Question, be miserable : Let
me therefore desire you to favour me with
some Rules, by which I may shape my Course
you have stumm'd the Tides of Youth, and
beat back Temptation with Courage and
Success ; these Waves that have past by you,

rush

A Gentleman instructed, &c. 11

rush on me ; so that the Danger is certain, my Escape doubtful. I fling my self into your Arms. I have at least learnt the first Lesson of Prudence, *viz.* To submit to the Advice of those whom Age and Experience have sufficiently instructed.

Nean. My Age is on its Declension, yet I am not (God be thank'd) ashame'd to live, or afraid to die ; I neither contemn Life, nor overvalue it ; and therefore expect my *quietus* with Patience, and will welcome my Discharge. I have withdrawn from the Hurry and Tumult of worldly Affairs, and now lead a Retired, but not an Ignoble Life : I gave my last Farewel to the Court, not by Force, but Choice ; and indeed, it deserves no Thought but of Contempt. I have tasted of Bad Fortune, and of Good ; but never placed my Happiness in the one, or my Misery in the other ; nor have I entred into the World like a Mute, merely to fill the Stage, No, I once made no contemptible Figure by my Prince's Benevolence, and though in the confusion of the Government, I fell from my Post, I carried off my Honesty in Triumph, and exposed my Estate to secure my Loyalty ; yet, God be prais'd, I am not brought to the Basket ; though I had rather live on Charity than Rapine, and wou'd sooner earn my

my Bread by the Sweat of my Brow, than of my Conscience. In my Retirement, I have had occasion to study Things, and to reflect on Men, and have made Observations on both, so that I am not quite unprovided of those Qualities the Office you impose upon me requires: I'll therefore take the Liberty to counsel you as a Friend, not as a Master; let us retire into my Closet.

DI A L O G U E II.

Eusebius instructs Neander in the Duty of a Christian.

Euseb. **Y**OU must act two Parts; of a Gentleman, and of a Christian: We'll discourse of the latter at our next Meeting, and at present only touch the former. Some Gentlemen keep up to their Character without the adventagious Helps of Precepts, or Education; you may read their Birth on their Faces; their Gate and *Mein* tell their Quality; they both Charm and Awe, and at the same time flash Love and Reverence; their Extraction glitters under all Disguises; it sparkles in Sackcloth, and breaks through all the Clouds of Poverty

ty and Misfortune ; there is a *je ne scay quoy* in their whole Demeanour, that tears off the Vizor, and discovers Nobility though it sculks *incognito* ; they are reserved without Pride ; and familiar without Meanness ; they time their Behaviour to Circumstances, and know when to stand on tip-toe, and when to stoop : In fine, their most trivial Actions are Great, and their Discourse is Noble.

Others seem to be born Gentlemen to shame Quality ; one would swear Nature intended to frame 'em for the *Dray*, and Chance flung 'em into the World with an *Escutcheon* : They are all of a piece, Clown without, and Coxcomb within ; and so like *Foplings* are graced with Titles to play the *Ape* by Patent : These of the first *Classe* need no Precepts, and those of the Second deserve none ; however, Counsel may be useful to others ; for Behaviour is acquired like other Arts, by Study and Application.

I.

To begin the Part of a Gentleman, persuade your self, its your Duty, and Interest to act it well ; for whosoever looks upon it as a matter of small Concern will come off with Disesteem ; he will follow the Bent of Nature, and swim down the Stream of Inclination,

clination, rather than strive against it ; for who will balk Humour, or fence against ill Customs for nothing ? This I take to be the Reason, why so many in Conversation fall below their Station ; they fancy a Title supported with Means, places 'em in a Region above the Niceties of Breeding ; that a *Sir* gilds the most unbeseeming Behaviour, and a *Coronet* dignifies Rusticity ; but this is a mistake ; for as Gentlemen stand above the Crowd, so they lie more open to View and Censure : For Actions are not rated by Men, but Men by Actions ; and if these smell of the Clown, or sute with the Peasant, *Right Worshipful* must be content with those Titles ; for the *Mob* knows well enough, that Gentlemen can claim no Respect from Nature : they are all of the same Matter, and the Soul of a *Lazarus* is of as refined a Metal as that of *Dives* ; and therefore, if they see no advantage, on Quality's side, but a Coach and Six ; they be apt to think themselves as good Men as their Masters, though not so Rich ; and that they are beholden more to Chance or Injustice for their Fortune, than to Merit.

II.

Let not your Family be the Subject of your Discourse, nor fling the Registers of your

your Genealogy on the Table before all Company ; this Topick is both Fulsom and Ungentile ; its a shrewd Argument you are big of Conceit, and more obliged to your Ancestors for your Blood, than for your Wit ; though your Great Grandfather rode Admiral at Sea with 2000*l. per annum*, if he has left Posterity no other Mark of his Greatness, but his Vices, I shall rank him among the most wretched Creatures that ever breathed ; seeing the height of his Station only rais'd him above the Vulgar to proclaim his Shame, and render his Infamy more perspicuous ; its a Madness to take the measure of our Deserts by the parts of our Forefathers, their Personal Worth adds not one Hairs breadth to our Stature : We may enter upon their Estates, and perchance upon their Titles, but not upon their Virtues ; these are neither entailed on the Family, nor alienable by any Deed of Conveyance.

Besides, whoever rakes in the Ashes of the Dead, may fall upon the Stench instead of Perfumes ; for after Enquiry, who knows but you may find the Source of your Nobility tainted with Treason, and that the very Title you bear is the price of Disloyalty ? Now though according to the Proverb, *Those Children are happy whose Parents are in Hell* ;

Hell; yet certainly, a Son should not boast of the Purchase, nor look big because his Father is miserable: Let your Ancestors therefore sleep in their Graves, and be not so foolish as to disturb 'em by your Vanity; adopt their Virtues by Imitation and Practice; but have a care of their Vices. I honour Nobility set off with Merit, but when he has no other Prop than Money and *Patent*; I always compare it to those proud Temples of *Egypt*, that under Gilt Frontispieces, and Azur'd Vaults, lodged nothing but Statues of *Rats* and *Crocodiles*. I value more an Innocent Ploughman, than a Vicious Prince; and prefer his Nobility who has built a great Fortune, upon Worth and Virtue, before his, who by Succession receives one.

III.

As its ungentile to boast of our Family, so its no less Mean and Childish to spend Rhetorick on our Performances. If your Prince and Country honour you with a high Employment, either in the *Camp* or the Bench, discharge your self of the Trust with Reputation: deserve Panegyricks, but play not the Orator your self; though you are as Eloquent as *Tully*, you'll only labour to spoil a good Subject, and whilst you vainly set off your own Feats, you'll meet with nothing but

but Shame and Infamy. *N. N.* was an excellent Souldier, he fear'd nothing but Fear ; he chose always the *Van*, and was often the first Man on the Breach ; all admir'd his Courage, and prais'd it ; and even those who disapproved his Conduct, did Justice to his Valour ; but this Gentleman lost at Table, the Glory he had won in the Field, and talk'd away in his Winter Quarters the Honour he had purchased the whole Campaign. I did *this*, said he, at the Siege of *R*, and *this* at the Battle of * ; had I not seized on such a Post at **, the Army had been in Danger : One would have thought all the Generals and Soldiers had been in Garrison, and that *N. N.* with his small Brigade alone, defeated the Designs of the *French*. This overgrown Vanity cost him dear ; for instead of gaining the Reputation of a General, he went off with that of a Fop, and all concluded he was too ambitious of Praise to deserve any. Your deep Rivers move with a silent Majesty, shallow Brooks alone make a Noise and Tumult among Pebles. The great Marshal *de Turenne* never spoke of himself, but forc'd, and even then, with Modesty : And though the King was wholly indebted to the wise Conduct of this Gallant Man for many Victories, yet he never said so : No, he wou'd lay Miscarriages at his own Door, and Success

cess at that of his Officers and Soldiers ; this made him appear great even in his Over-throw, and generally his Moderation was more glorious to him than Victory. Imitate the Silence of this *Hero*, not the noisie Impertinence of Fools ; carry off the Satisfaction of great Actions, and let others go with the Honour of praising 'em, and let People rather learn your Atchivements at the Stationers, than at your Table.

IV.

Avoid the modish Rant of Oaths, and Imprecations : It's an ungentile Dialect, as well as unchristian, and clashes both with the Rules of Breeding, and of the Gospel. Custom indeed has made 'em fashionable, but neither civil nor lawful ; For Vice can never plead Prescription. I know it lies under the Protection of Number and Quality ; but Ill things have no right to Sanctuary : Because Vermin swarm, must they be permitted to encrease ? Shall the Number of Felons plead for Pardon ? No, no, the Customari-ness of Ill things makes 'em worse ; and the more they must be discontenanced, and taught Discipline. In a Word, whatever jars with Religion, and cuts upon good Breeding, is below a Gentleman : And therefore in Spight of Example and Practice, I must caution

this caution you against some parts of English Civility ; for though they go for *Content* in the English Dominions, they'll not bear the Tests of other Nations.

For Example, *Damn ye*, says one, *I am glad to see you* : Is not this a quaint Salutation ? First to pack me away to Hell ? and then to protest he is glad to see me so conveniently lodg'd ? What Provision will these Blades make for their Enemies, if they place their Friends so untowardly ? Certainly, they fancy Hell is a fine Seat, and that the Damned are in a fair way of Promotion ?

Damn ye Dog how dost doe ? crys another : Thisfeat Compliment implies Damnation and Transformation too : Its a Compound of Curse and Raillery. I am plunged into Hell, dasht out of the List of Rationals, and then with a Taunt ask't how I do. Why ? a Man in Fire and Brimstone is not altogether at his Ease, and a reasonable Creature curst into a Dog not very fond of the Metamorphosis.

A third very gentilely accosts a Friend and he has not perchance seen of a twelve-month, *Ye Son of a Whore where have you been* ? This is an English Address to a Title : Its a kind of Staple Commodity of the Nation, and like our Wool must not be transported

ported under Pain of Confiscation : But surely we need not lay so severe an Embargo on the Ware, for its ten to one 'twill never find Vent in any other Nation on this side of the *Canaries* ; a handful of Dirt well applied is as civil a Compliment, though not quite so cleanly. *Son of a Whore* ! There is abundance of Freedom in the Expression, but not a grain of Breeding : Unless you measure Behaviour by the Dialect of *Billingsgate* and the *Bear-Garden*. Certainly these Gentlemen are no Admirers of Charity ; why else do they dignifie Whoredom ? For *Whore* stands for a Mark of Quality, a distinguishing Character ; otherwise the Salutation would appear course and homely ; but by their Leave, few are in Love with *Cross-bars* ; and to be Brother to a By-blow, is to be a Bastard once removed.

I know we fling a Veil on these Expressions, and wash over their Foulness with fair Pretences. *Damn ye* (says one) and *Son of Whore* stand merely for *Cyphers*, or only serve to enliven a Period, and to make the Expression more blustering ; I confess *Whore* and *Damnation* are near of kin, and often go together ; But for all that, the Silliness of the Excuse can't stifle the monstrous Incivility of the Compliment ; for though it signifies nothing to him who receives it,

in

in good time it will signifie much to him that spoke it : For tho' a Friend may let such Curses fall to the Ground, God will put 'em to Account ; and though they stand for *Cyphers in England*, they may purchase eternal Torments in Hell.

They are, says another, Marks of *English Familiarity*, pure Sallies of Kindness and Demonstrations of Friendship. No doubt, to deliver over to Satan, an old Acquaintance, without asking his Consent to the Conveyance, is Freedom with a Vengeance ; but at which End of the Compliment is his kindness ? In short, *Neander*, such expressions grate the Organ, and turn the very Faculty of Hearing into a Burthen ; they are high Symptoms of a a lewd Inclination and of a depraved Complexion ; for when the Breath smells rank, the Stomach is infected. In short, such a *Jargon* is a Brach of Civility, its a a Rustick *Cant*, an uncreditable Dialect ; nor is the whole *Posse* of Bullies able to ennable it.

V.

When Civility obliges you to visit Ladies, pray keep your Compliments to the Rules of Christianity ; there is no Necessity of laying Religion at the Door with your

your *Goloshes*, nor of denying God when you entertain her Ladyship : For certainly Breeding is not incompatible with Religion, and a Man may make an Address *alamode* without apostatizing from Christianity : Yet though the Worship of the Virgin *Mary* be disallowed of, we may adore Ladies without the Breach of a Statute, and commit Idolatry not only without Reproof, but even without Sin : One swears, *Heaven sits in his Smiles, and Hell in his Frowns*. A second styles her *Saint* ; tho' perchance her Ladyship is more stockt with Beauty than Piety, and her Face better provided with Grace than her Soul : A third enlarges her Perfections ; he ranks her among the Angels to and to compleat the Folly with Blasphemy, they fourth *deifies* her : These Pagan Compliments are the Standard of Courtship, the Scale of Ceremony, and the Measure of Breeding. But after all, Practice can never rick blanch over the Foulness of these daring Expressions ; every Syllable breaths Frenzy and Blasphemy ; nor is there any way to adhere quit these raving Platonicks of a Crime, but by supposing 'em unreasonable. A few Pinches handsomely sprinkled would very effectually dislodge the *Angel*, as perchance her Lewdness has banish'd the *Saint* ; and a few small Pox would chequer her Divinity into Ruins.

and tumble the Goddess into a Monster ; and then Hell might as well perch on her Smiles, as on her Frowns. But Rallery apart, tho' we fling Impiety out of the Question, such Addresses are plain Satyr, and invective on the Sex : For they suppose Women either extravagantly proud or superlatively silly ; now the very Supposition is both ungentile and scandalous. I am sensible indeed the Sex is no Enemy to Hyperbole in Courtship ; Women are more fond of these Glasses that conceal Disproportions, than of those that reveal present 'em ; they can't well distinguish between Flattery and Merit, and as they eagerly desire these Perfections that are proper to their Sex, so they easily are perswaded they possess 'em ; for we soon believe, what we earnestly desire : So hence it is, that they take a pleasing Rallery for a serious Truth, and even sometimes a *Lampoon* for a Panegy-neverick ; but then an ungrateful Truth puts 'em into a Ferment ; it ruffles their good Humour, and sours their Blood. Something therefore may be allowed to Custom and their Constitution ; flatter their *Ladyships* into an even Temper, rather than reason them out of it, provided you keep within a mean, and step not beyond the Bounds of Decency ; but to break into Flights of Impiety, into Raptures of Blasphemy, is to play the fool and the Atheist.

VI.

Gentlemen have so much time on their Hands that they know not how to spend it ; its a Burthen and a Charge, and so like Prodigals they rather fling it away than take Pains to improve it. I counsel you therefore to set aside some Hours for Reading ; its a handsome Diversion, and conveys Profit through Pleasure ; the Intellect is a grateful Soil ; but then like a Field it requires manuring. By Reading you join past Ages to the present, you Travel into *Asia, Africa* and *America* without expence, without danger, nay without walking out of your Closet. Sensual Pleasures rather stupifie than delight, they play upon the Organ, and dull the Appetite, they are often brutal, and seldom innocent ; but those of the Understanding shine brighter, they are of a more refined Metal, free from Dross and void of Repentance ; they extend the Faculty, and render it more rational ; they rather whet Desire than glut it, and screw up Man's topping Argument, *Reason*, up to the highest Pitch. A Gentleman furnish'd with Reading, can never be at a Loss to set on foot, and carry on a handsome Conversation ; he is always well stockt, and carries his Provisions about him ; whereas others are forc'd to fetch Mats and

ter from the Kennel or the Stable, and too often from the Stews; their Discourse is a Compound of Smut and Rallery, enlivened always with Fooleries, and sometimes seasoned with Oaths and Blasphemies: Non-sense, in fine, though not the most creditable, is the most innocent and less blamable Ingredient. Good God! how often have I lost Patience, and fretted away good Humour in the Company of Gentlemen of fair Estates, and of noble Extraction; methought they had serv'd an Apprenticeship under Grooms or Dog-boys; they eternally grated my Ears with Hounds and Horses, and broke out into such clamorous Tumults, as if they had been drawing up the Grievances of the Nation, or pelting the Prerogative; yet after all, the Question was only, whether *Puss* or *Light-foot* got the better last Chace. Racing and Hunting are indeed laudable Recreations; and upon Occasions may discourse of; but then, to harp perpetually upon these Creatures, is an infallible Argument their Thoughts are mean, and too itch weak wing'd to soar above the Beast. Some years ago I took a Turn beyond the Seas, and made a considerable Stay in those Parts: At my Return, I gave a Visit to an old Acquaintance; a Man of Character, of Estate, of an ancient Family, and *Deputy Lieutenant* of a County;

County ; he was at Table ; a Hawking-Bag hung on the left side, and a Bumpkin guarded the right ; his Hat, Coat and Wigg were all of a piece, more fit for a *Scare-Crow* than a *Deputy* ; his Memory was as short as his Wigg ; for some Years Absence had wiped out our **Acquaintance** ; he knew me not, and indeed, I was no less puzzled to find my Friend under so slovenly a **Disguise** : However, at length we renewed our old **Species**, and then he very warmly embrac'd me with this **Salutation** ; *Eusebius, by God I am glad to see thee* : I expected he would follow this quaint Compliment with an Enquiry into my Health, or satisfied his Curiosity with a Rehearsal of my Travels ; that he would ask in what Posture I left our Allies ; whether they made Preparations for the Siege of *Namur*, or *Monsieur* for that of *Maeſtricht* ; whether *Prince Eugene* entered *Cremona* with greater Glory, or left it with greater Infamy ; whether *Fribergen* did better to receive a *Stab* from *Mahony*, than quarter ; or whether this brave *Baron* died like a Fool or a Hero : In fine, what Advantage the Imperialists got by the Victory at *Luzzara* ; or whether the Profit would ballance the Expence of Powder and Shot, laid out in the *Empire* on the **Thanksgiving-Day**.

No, the Gentleman's Curiosity never travelled so far ; he had confined his Knowledge within the Bounds of his own Country ; all the rest of the World was *Terra incognita* to his *Worship* : He fell immediately upon the Excellency of *Tobacco* ; and then halled me to the Stable, that I may pay my Respect to *Bobtail* ; and in the way honoured me with an accurate Account of his Poultry. Oh ! said I to my self, had this *Lieutenant* hunted less, and read more ; had he cultivated his Understanding, and let a Field or two lie *fallow*, he might have been Company for Men : But alas he was the Darling of the Family ; he hectored it at Home, whilst he should have been at School and Abroad ; was made a Man at Fifteen, to be a Child and Coxcomb at Threescore.

I would not have you upon all Occasions discourse in Syllogism, nor deliver your Thoughts in Mood and Figure : Such Philosophical Cant suites better with a Pedant, than a Gentleman ; and may pass in the School, but not in the *Parlour*. Neither press upon Company a *Vacuum*, nor Mr. Boyle's *Pondus Atmospherae* ; a civil Conversation may be managed handsomely in either *Hypothesis* ; and I conceive Discourse prosper'd no less in the Days of good old *Materia Prima*, than in the Reign of *des Cartes*'s Third Element.

You may also let the Grand *Mogul* sit quietly at *Agra*, and *Prestre John* in *Ethiopia*; few Gentlemen's Knowledge Travels so far from Home. *France*, *Spain* and *Italy* lie more conveniently; besides *Claret*, *Malago*, and *Flasks of Florence* have given us some Notions of those Kingdoms.

Time your Subject; Good things spoke out of Season, lose their Value. I would not harangue a Lady in *Greek*, nor a Country Vicar in *Hebrew*: For alas, her Learning goes not beyond *French*, nor his above *Latin*: Discourse must be adapted to the Company; and it takes more when it naturally slides in, than when drawn in by Head and Shoulders. In a Word, *Ntander*, enrich your Understanding by the Knowledge of things that become your Quality; and when you are doubly equip't, (I mean with a fair Estate, and a good Fund of Learning) what can you desire more, but an ordinary Stock of Prudence to lay them out at Advantage?

VII.

Converse not ordinarily with Persons above your Rank, nor with those that are below it; that will endanger your Estate, this your Breeding. A Man of 1000 Pound *per Annum*, can't long keep Pace with one of Ten thousand; he'll infallibly lag, and jade

by

cowar

fly in

by the way ; and perchance be forc't to take in at the next Jayl : Or, if in time he resolve to forestal his Ruin, he must fast out the Riot of a short *Carnaval* with a long Lent ; he must stint himself to a short Pittance, and lop off a Branch to secure the Stock : For Estate-Wounds fester into a Gangrene, and nothing but the *Saw* or Seering-Iron can stop the Infection.

But on the other side, to herd with Peasants is a kind of voluntary Degradation ; its to break your *Escutcheon*, and to commence Yeoman. Peasantry is a Disease (like the Plague) easily caught by Conversation ; its a Colour that takes on any Subject, and seldom wears off : Why then shall a Person of Honour forfeit his Patent without Treason ? Clowns are a sort of encroaching Animals : give an Inch, they'll take an Ell, and repay your Familiarity with Contempt and Outrage : If you intend to oblige 'em to a Distance, stoop not below your Station, nor set 'em on equal Ground ; if once you make 'em Companions, they'll usurp the Authority of Masters ; for they want Prudence to manage a Familiarity, but not Impudence to abuse it : But take Care not to Brow-beat 'em, nor pretend to keep 'em under too severe Discipline ; for the most despicable and cowardly Creatures, if forc't, will turn and fly in your Face.

VIII.

Some Gentlemen are so punctilioſ and nice, that they look on Business as a thing below their Level: No, they'll not look on their Accounts, though their Estate lies in an Agony; as if there were no Difference between *Prudence* and *Trading*. But certainly Wisdom jars not with Quality; and I hope, one may be a good Husband without turning Clown: Its no Branch of a Gentleman's Prerogative to be bubbled out of House and Home. When Expences run high, is it not fit at least to provide against Fraud and Circumvention? Prodigality on the one side, and Fraud on the other will soon drain an Estate to the Lees. Do not therefore all by Deputy: To trust a Steward too much, is to expose his Vertue. Honesty is not always Proof against Temptation; Men often cheat without Scruple, when they can do it without Fear. Remember, that Nobility ſtript of Means, makes no gentle Figure; it can't stand without golden Supporters: Model therefore your Expences by your Income, and reflect you possess Lands, not Mines; *two* thousand expended and *one* received will not ballance Accounts at the Year's End: If you are wise live on the Crop, not on the Land; convey not a Lordship to

London

London in a Bill of Exchange, nor carry *Acres* in your Pocket ; they thrive well in Country Air, but fall into Consumptions and Hefticks at *White-Hall* and *Groomporters*, and soon expire ; and then you must run upon the *Common*, or live on Charity or Courtesy ; or *Chamelion* like, on the Air, unless you had rather turn Knight Errant on the King's high Way , or take up your Quarters at *Tyburn*. Believe me, *Nendar*, Poverty is unfashionable in our Days, and Dependance uneasy ; take Care therefore of the main Chance, lay by a Reserve for Age and Accidents: A new Lordship does not (like a *Phœnix*) jump out of the Ashes of the old : No, when it is gone, Hope follows it ; nothing remains but Beggary, Contempt, Despair, and Repentance.

Be neither *Covetous* nor *Profuse* ; Extreams are vicious ; that seems less gentle, and this more foolish. I hate to see a Gentleman (like a Snail) draw in his Figure to save his Purse, and not only want the Conveniences, but even the Necessaries of Life in the Face of Abundance : This is almost to antedate Misery, and to turn the Fable of *Tantalus* into a real Story. I would no more trust such a *Miser*, than a *Foot-Pad* or a *Cut-Purse* ; he who loves Money more than himself, will

infallibly rate it above Honesty, and he'll stretch a Point, and unloose Conscience when Opportunity opens any Prospect of Gain: For to a *Miser* Knavery and Couze-nage are unquestionable *Axioms*, and ought to be supposed as a *Postulatum*: In a Word, its a base Employment to lie on Earth, and to stand *Sentinel* to Interest; I would neither *fawn* on Money for Money's Sake; nor *duck* and *drake* it away for a Frolick: No, I would not part with my Liberty for a *Spanish Flota*, nor with a Shilling for a good Morrow; that would be to overvalue Slavery; and this to under-rate Silver.

Let your Equipage run even with your Purse and Quality. Staye not your self to feed Lacqueys; nor give 'em a Coach (as *N. A.* did) to save their Liveries. Handsome Regales sometimes, buoy up Credit, cherish Friendship, nourish Mirth, and breath Life and Spirit into Conversation; though they sink your Purse, they do not drain it; at least you'll receive Credit for your Money.

IX.

A continual Application to Busines works when upon the Brain, it exhausts the Spirits, and one undermines Health: Nature must not be run strip down, allow it time to breath; if you are mad always

always on the Spur, you'll jade it. Exchange therefore sometimes your serious Employments for honest and gentle Recreations ; they refresh the Mind, unburthen Nature, enliven the Faculties, and pour new Life and Vigour into the Body : Chuse those that are more diverting and less expensive ; a Pleasure overpurchased is a real Torment, and then if they require Study and Application, you do not so much ease Nature as change the Burthen. I would not have you venture upon Games of Hazard, unless Civility oblige you, and even then stake no more, than you dare lose without Passion : Those Plays, like Quick Sands, swallow Estates at a sitting ; they devour a Man's Patience, and cast Nature into a Ferment. Good God ! How uneasy have I seen Gamesters ? Methought they sat on Thorns, or Tenters ; you might see Passion in their Gestures, and read Despair on their Faces ; they broke through all the Barriers of Modesty and *Decorum*, and diced away their Money first, and then flung Patience after it. Had Force stretcht these Gamesters on that Rack, I should have pitied their Misfortune ; but when I reflected they were their own Executio[n]ers ; let 'em suffer (said I) nothing but stripes can teach Fools Wisdom, nor restore mad Men to their Wits.

I met once Sir *N. N.*, an old Acquaintance ; Whither so fast (said I) old Friend ? I am, replied he, on an Expedition ; you are methinks (answered I again) too crazy for a Winter Campagne, and too old to turn *Marodeur*, or Partizan : Nay, (*said he*) my Business lies within Doors : In short, I am bound for St. *James's*, where I intend to fling away a hundred Guinneys. To fling away a hundred Guinneys ; said I. Prethee if you are overcharged with Coin, favour me with the Burthen ; you 'll play the Fool at least with a better Grace, and Trouble : But the Proposal did not relish ; he wou'd (Gentleman like) keep his Word, though he lost his Purse ; and had rather forfeit his Estate than his Credit. He invited me to accompany him ; away we drove to the Place of Rendezvonz, where we found his Antagonist ready to encounter : Down they sat, and to 't they went ; at the beginning the Dice favour'd my old Knight so strangely, that I thought good Luck and he were of Intelligence. Lord ! How the old Gentleman crow'd ! Joy danc't through every Joynt ; you might see it flush in his Face, and gild the Decays of Nature : In fine, good Luck seem'd to have filed off his Account twenty Years, and to have put as many more to his Credit ; but then if good Humour sat on

on this side of the Table, bad sat on the other ; the young Squire first took the Pet, then Clouds began to rise, which made me expect a Tempest ; nor was I deceived in my Conjecture, for immediately away flie the Dice with a Brace of Curses at their Heels ; then Fortune is halled to the Bar, arraigned and condemned : Providence brings up the Reer of the Criminals ; you wou'd have thought this one and twenty came in a direct Line from *Hercules*, he play'd the *Furioso* so lively.

And now Sir *N. N.* was entring the Haven with his golden Fleece ; when on a sudden the Wind chopt about, and blew in his Teeth ; the Tables are turned, the Scene is chang'd, the Knight fumes, and the Squire triumphs ; one curses the Dice, the other gives 'em his Blessing : they steer their Passions by the *Cube*, and vary with the Casts. In fine, my Friend stood to his Word, he left the Field and a hundred Guinneys to the Victor, and lost all Gravity and Moderation. I accompanied him to his Lodgings ; but I found he was even lurcht of good Nature also. Well (said I) do you call this Play ? Can Sport and Anxiety, Fear and Despair stand together ? Hell and Heaven are as compatible : I would as soon for Diversion take a turn upon the Rack, or lay my Head between.

tween the Anvil and the Hammer ; these Torments are not greater, but I am sure are less expensive.

Neander, you may learn by this, how ill these Plays deserve the Name of Recreation ; fly 'em therefore as the Plague, they prey upon Content, corrode Satisfaction, and in Conclusion swallow Estates, and commend Nobility to the Parish.

Hawking and Hunting are more manly, more gentle, and more diverting ; these Sports are almost as ancient as our Nature, they have kept up their Reputation in spight of all the Vicissitudes of Time and Fortune ; but then they must be taken with Moderation, like Physick for Health, not like Meat for Diet. To range eternally in Woods and Thickets after Beasts is rather the Office of a Keeper; than the Sport of a Gentleman. I blame not the Recreation, but the Excess : For though Hunting be a royal Pastime ; its certainly a base and servile Employment.

Nean. Pray what is your Opinion of Dancing and Musick ? are they gentle Accomplishments ?

Euseb. No doubt : They embellish Quality, and give a pretty turn to Breeding ; they furnish a Man with all the little Ingredients, necessary for a *quaint Address*, and usher

usher him into company with Advantage ; they relieve a drooping Discourse : For when Reason runs low, and Conversation languishes, a Stroke of the Fiddle, a Song or a *Saraband* well perform'd may enliven it : But don't over-rate these Talents, nor place 'em among the first Rate Qualifications of a Gentleman ; for in reality they only fit you up for a modish Address and a female Entertainment. Let a Man rather trim up his Mind than his Body : Those Embellishments are more *noble* and *rich* that lie in the Brain, than those that sink into the Feet, or *perch* on the Finger's End.

X.

When Innocence left the World, Cloaths came into Fashion ; they were only invented as a Screen to Nakedness, and a Defence to *Decency* ; you must not therefore invert the Institution, nor turn the marks of Infamy into Badges of Grandeur ; for its a Madness to Pride in our Shame, and to look big because we are poor and indigent : Indeed a Gentleman should not clatter in *Sabots*, nor trudge about in *Linsy-Woolsy*. Quality under such a Disguise would make a slovenly Figure : Be neat without Gaudiness, gentle without Affectation : In fine, the Taylor must take measure both of your Purse and of

of your Quality, as well as of your Person : For a Suit that fits the Character, is more *a la mode* than that which sits well on the Body. I have seen some Fops over-shoot Extravagance ; they ransack't all the Shops in *Pater Noster Row* and *Cheapside* for the Matter, and consulted the whole Company of Merchant Taylors for the Form ; a man of War might be rigged up with less Noise, and sometimes at less Expence : Now though fine Feathers make fine Birds, yet surely gawdy Trap-pings can't make fine Gentlemen ; for the Embellishments of Quality are Wit, Judgment and Behaviour ; an Air that's noble without Haughtiness, and condescending without Meanness ; now these Qualifications lodge in the Soul, they lie in the Head, not on the Back ; the effects indeed run to the Superficies, but the Cause sculks out of sight.

I suppose we put not off our Nobility at Night, nor put it on in the Morning at the *Toylet* ; why then are we smitten with Drapery, and dote on Finery ? this must be understood with Regard to Decency ; Allowance must be given to Custom, and Opinion ; a Gentleman must not be so unpretending in Appearance, as to affect Slovenliness ; this is to sacrifice one Vice to another, to attone for Vanity with Nastiness ; walk between these.

these two Extremes ; though you use both Shops and Taylors ; depend on neither ; build not your Reputation on Silks, nor your Worth on Stuffs : For in a Word, they are meer Excrements of poor Animals : Now to make the baseit part of Worms and Sheep, the top of our Greatness, is in Effect to commence Beast. *Neander*, put on a good Humour, a sine Behaviour, a noble Disposition, and you'll keep the Mob at a Distance ; but whosoever pretends to dazzle Men into Respect, meerly with Scarlet and Gold Lace, will fall short of his Pretensions. Men are not awed by Cloaths, but Virtue : Old *Fabricius* in his *Jerkin*, and *Curius* in the Chimney Corner, were more esteemed and feared than *Caligula* or *Heliogabulus*, in all their State and Bravery.

XI.

Let not one Action stoop below the Level of your Quality ; but be not deceived in the Notion of Honour, this is a necessary *Caveat* in the mad Age we live. Some confound Honour with Profit, others with Pleasure ; but by the Rules of this new System, Pilfering and Lewdness are dignifying Qualifications : And so Footpads, Cutpurses, and Debauchees may pretend to the Right of *Peerage* ;

Peerage ; but others seat it on the Swords Point, and perswade themselves it consists in slaughter ; as if there were no Difference between Honour and Savageness, between a Gentleman and a Butcher : These are a Race of European Cannibals, who worry their Species and devour Man's Flesh ; true Anthropophagi, who sport in Blood, and turn Slaughter into a Diversion ; they are known by the Names of *Scowlers* and *Duellists* ; but these Appellations are too innocent for so base, so barbarous an Employment ; they stand guilty of Murder by the Laws of the Land, and therefore are mark't with Shame and Infamy by the Government : But besides they are condemned by the Law of God, and so are at once outlawed by Religion and the State : What I beseech you, can stigmatize and degrade a Practice more efficaciously than this double Excommunication ?

But, says a Gentleman, shall I receive an **Affront** ? Yes, I hope rather than a Stab, or a Haulter ; that may be retrieved, but a Wound in the Heart or a disjoyned Neck, are irremediable. But must I swallow *the Lie too* ? Why not if you deserve it ? The Punishment exceeds not the Crime, and methinks its reasonable for the Penalty and the Fault to go together : For pray reflect if the

Impu-

Imputation of a Lie be so offensive to Quality, the thing it self is much more ; and therefore you ought rather to take those Imputations as Admonitions than Affronts.

But suppose it be a Calumny, I wou'd either contemn it or pardon it ; a Man must undervalue the Benefit of Ease and the Price of Life to sell it for so inconsiderable a Trifle ; for in the Judgment of the Law its nothing, it will not bear an Action. Now seeing we submit to the Opinion of the Judges in other Differences, why are we refractory in this Case ? The Law is the Standard not only of Right and Wrong ; but of Honour and Infamy : And seeing it will not take Cognisance of so petty an Aspersion, it suppose it below Notice.

Ay ! But Custom has ennobled Revenge : and we had better be out of the World, than out of the Fashion. Under Favour the King is the only Fountain of Honour, and I cannot find he ever made over to Custom this Prerogative Royal.

But what is this Custom you talk of ? (i.e.) a Club of *Desperadoes* without Religion, without Conscience, a Pack of *Renegado Christians* who are a Scandal to their Profession, and a Shame to their Nature ; vote Murder

a brave Action; and you obtrude this Atheistical Error for the universal Opinion of Mankind, for the Standard of Honour and Bravery. Why? Such Men's Judgments are as false as their Principles, and their Opinions as depraved as their Manners; because Rascals extol Perjury; Highway-men, Robbery; and Debauchees, Lewdness, are these creditable and innocent Vocations? Because Perjury, Robbery, and Licentiousness are common, are they lawful?

Besides, can any thing be more extravagantly foolish, than the Punctilio of a Duel-list? One has given me the Lie; to wipe off the Affront, I must provoke him to tilt at my Lungs. Ay, but Right stands for you! but what if Fortune stand for your Antagonist? Right is a dull Weapon, unless Skill and good Luck manage it, the clandestine Revenges of the *Italians* are cruel and diabolical, but at least they are less foolish than ours; they will not bath their wounded Honour in their own Blood, but in that of their Enemy; and therefore they attack unawares or by Proxy; but we revenge at our own Expence, nay and upon our selves, and sometimes at a Disadvantage too; as if to retrieve our Honour we must die like Fools. I know not what Charms others may see in a Stab, I had rather be sent into the other

World

World by the Hangman than a Duellist ; a Duel is an ill Distemper to die of, though possibly Atheists may think it a gentle one ; and I am confident these Martyrs of Honour will be discomposed when they find their Reception in the next Life falls short of their Expectation.

Death, *Neander*, is a great Leveller. Titles, Quality, Wealth with all their Appurtenances leave us with the last Breath : A Clown will meet with Respect if he be innocent, and a Prince with Contempt if guilty ; our Treatment will answer our Actions, not our Birth ; a Scavenger that dies in Peace with God shall be conveyed into Glory ; and a Lord that expires in Sin into Torments.

XII.

Some Gentlemen refine Breeding too much ; they affect a Singularity in Behaviour as well as in Religion, and so make themselves ridiculous to appear gentle ; these are a *Heterogeneous* Race of Gentlemen some call Fops, and others Beaus ; they are a Compound of Farce and Ceremony, a Mixture of *Mimick* and *Tragedian* ; had their Mothers made a Voyage to the *Indies*, I should suspect they had some Relation to an

Ape :

Ape: For certainly they are of a mixt Species, and often the Beast predominates, but always the Coxcomb; if the Beau has more Wit, the Ape has more Judgment; these Gentlemen speak like Puppets, and walk by Clock Work; they pass the Morning between the *Glass* and the *Toylet*, and summon to their *Leve* the whole *Posse* of *Tay-lors*, *Barbers*, and *Sempstresses*; they value more the Art of dressing well, than the knack of paying: And whilst others admire their Folly, like young *Narcissus*, they contemplate their own Beauty: Pray leave these People and their Behaviour to themselves, and if you can't avoid their Company, catch not their *Grimaces*: Its true you must prepare for an Attack; for like People struck with the *Plague*, they love to give the Infection; if they find you resty, they'll not fail to direct your Motions and anatomize your Comportment, and then you must expect to be lampoon'd in *Verse*, or pelted in *Prose*; but they always meet with poor *Cassandra*'s Fortune, never to be believed; Their yeas go for *no's*, and their *Satyrs* for *Panegyricks*: I might enlarge upon this Subject, but I fear, I have already trespass't upon your Patience.

Near.

Neān. I see, Dear *Eusebius*, you are a Stranger to my Constitution, I am not so soon talked down; how can I spend my time better, than in learning how to spend it well?

After a short Discourse of indifferent things, *Neander* took Leave of *Eusebius* with a Promise to return the next Morning; he kept his Word, and *Eusebius* spoke thus.

DIALOGUE III.

Eusebius instructs Neander in the Duty of a Christian.

Euseb. IT's harder (dear *Neander*) to describe the Part of a Christian, than that of a Gentleman, and a matter of higher Importance to act it well; if a Gentleman falls below his Character, his Reputation may suffer, but not his Soul: He may not stand fair in Men's Opinion, but this is trivial Misfortune; for pray what great Advantage is it to be esteem'd by those who cannot be sufficiently blam'd? Alas! their esteem is so insignificant, that its neither able to credit nor disgrace.

But

But oh ! if our Life swerves from the Laws of Christianity, and if Death takes us away in this Disorder, we are undone for ever, eternally lost ! without hope of Change, or of retrieving our Misfortune: Upon this Point our all depends ; if we act a Christian well, we shall be received into the Joys of the Just ; but if ill, into the Punishments of the Impious : And both these States are everlasting, both immense, *that in Pleasure, this in Pains.*

Now when the Gain on the one side is so vast, and the Loss on the other so exorbitant, does not Reason tell us that we ought to bend all our Care, all our Application to discharge our selves of the Duties of a Christian ? I will therefore draw up a short Scheme of the most pressing Offices of your Profession, and furnish you with Motives able to perswade you to comply with 'em.

I.

The chief Reason why Men live at Random is, because they have forgot their Errant ; they fancy themselves to be the Work of Chance, the Offspring of Hazard, Creatures of Pleasure placed on the Land (as the Leviathan is in the Water) to sport and play ; but certainly

tainly we must have small Acquaintance with the Dignity of our Nature, and a mean Opinion of our Greatness to frame such wild Ideas. Our Understanding is too noble to be buried in Dung and Rubbish; and our Soul too spiritual to be condemned by Nature to the base Employments of Brutes.

No, no, *Neander*: God's Omnipotence framed us, and his Goodness designed us for himself alone. He has ennobled us with Reason to know his Greatness, with a Will to love his Goodness, and with a Soul to enjoy his Perfection. He is our *Alpha* and our *Omega*, the Origin of our Being, and the End of our Creation. It's impossible for us to be miserable with him, or happy without him.

II.

But, though we are made to enjoy God in Heaven, it's uncertain, whether we shall ever land at this thrice happy Haven of the Blessed; for God has decreed to communicate this suprem Felicity as a Reward, not as a Gift: We must take this City by Storm, not by Capitulation: We must enter *Lepee a la main*; & *violentia rapiunt illud*. But if the Difficulty cramps our Courage, if it bauks our Resolution, if we miscarry in the Enter-
prise,

prize, or fail in the Execution, we are undone for ever ; we must take up our Habitation in Hell, and dwell perpetually with Fire and Brimstone. This we believe (*Necander*) and the bare Thought of it sometimes congeals the very Blood in our Veins, and strikes us with Horror and Amazement. One Theft, one Murder, one Fornication unrepented, casts us into a Lake of Fire, into a Vale of Torments, into a sad Mansion of Despair, where we shall always burn, and never be consumed; always die, and ever live the Object of God's Wrath, and the perpetual Monument of our Folly and Disobedience. These two Points are, as it were, Postulatum in Morality, and God has been pleased to reveal 'em in almost every Chapter and Page of the New Testament, that he might allure us to our Duty by the charming Prospect of Heaven, or scare us to it by the dismal Representation of Hell.

III.

We can't tax God of Severity, nor complain of his Unkindness ; for though on the one Hand he draws up in *Battalia* all the Terrors of an unhappy Eternity to fright us ; on the other he displays all the Treasures of Heaven to whet our Hope, and animate our Courage ; nor does he lay our Salvation in

the

the Hands of Chance, or trust it to the Care of our Enemies. Yet he has entrusted every Man with his own Welfare ; so that we cannot be miserable, unless we conspire against our selves, and turn Traitors to our own Interest. If therefore we miscarry, must not the Fault lie at our own Door ? If we will be so stupid, as to fling up our Claim to Heaven ; so void of Reason, as to leap into Hell ; Do we not deserve to forfeit the one, and feel the other ? A Man, who in spite of Prayers and Tears will vault down Precipice, deserves to measure the Height of it by the Fall ; and if he breaks his Neck, who will not rather laugh at his Misfortune than pity it ?

IV.

Had God tied up our Happiness to harder Conditions, he had not over-rated it. For all we can either do or suffer in time, bears no Proportion with an Eternal Reward ; though he be our Master, he has behaved himself to us with all the Tenderness of an indulgent Father. For he has drawn up Articles so advantageous for us, that we must be mad to complain, either of Circumvention or hard Dealing : He requires nothing but love and Obedience. Now, who can in reason refuse to love an Infinite Beauty ? or

to obey an Omnipotent Power? We pay him Love and Obedience by keeping his Commandments, which are only hard to those that resolve to transgress 'em. *Et mandata ejus gravia non sunt.* Nay, they are so agreeable to Reason, that we must cross upon our Nature, before we can violate 'em, and almost cease to be Men, when we begin to be Sinners; in a Word, to be happy in the next World, we must be virtuous in this. Virtue is your Duty, *Neander*; and if you practice it seriously, 'twill prove your Pleasure. For God has so interwoven our Duty with our Satisfaction, that it's impossible for a Man to be innocently unhappy.

V.

Tho' Virtue be an Excellent Thing, it may be abused. It lies within the Reach of Fancy, Illusion, and Misapplication; there is false Virtue as well as an adulterate Coin. And as the *Lacedemonians* trickt up their Gods in the *Spartan* Dress; so oftentimes Men model Virtue by their own Passions. I have seen a morose Zealot eternally haranguing against the Corruption of the Age; all was wrong, all vicious that cross'd his few all Sorts of Humour. One would have thought Governors had constituted him *Inspector-General* of Mankind; he kickt and flung after so unchristian same

rate, 'twas dangerous to come within his Reach. Now, though Scripture and Reason call this *Siv*, he mistook it (good Man) for Virtue. His Error was Proof against Homily and Exhortation. You might have sooner persuaded him out of his Christian Name, than out of his peevish Humour.

As I esteem nothing more than true and genuine Virtue, so I abhor a Hypocrite. I hate those Mountebanks of the Spirit, who turn Piety into a Trade; who pray themselves into Livings, and whine themselves into Reputation; who practise Humility out of Pride, and Charity out of Spight; who preach up the most severe Morals in publick, and condemn 'em in private; whose Zeal is Censure, whose Justice is Interest, and Piety a Cover to Vanity. I have heard these Tartars lash the World to Excess, whilst they courted it to Extravagance: They extolled Solitude, yet were always in Company, and praised Virtue, when they practised Vice. In one Word, this Race of Men is a Medly of Opposites, humble without, and proud within; arrogant to Excess, and on Occasions submissive beyond Measure; all Fire, and all Smoak; Saints in Appearance, and Sinners in Effect.

Others place *Dagon* and the *Ark* on the same Alter. Like *Jehu* they blend Good with

Evil, Adore God in the Temple, and Golden Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*: Somtimes they are *all Spirit*, sometimes *all Body*: Now, they regale their Senses with a thousand Regous's of the most refined Lewdness: By and by they feast their Souls with the most high-seasoned Piety: One Day they surfeit with Fasting, another with Feasting: Yesterday they were tired with Kneeling, to Day with Dancing: They seldom miss a Semon, never a Play: If you see a Prayer-Book in their Hand, you may swear there is a *Lam-poone* in their Pocket: And if the Bible lies on their Desk, a *Romance* stands on the Shelf; so that they are half a Saint, and half Devil, but all Monster. I knew a He-Devotee, who wou'd speak so feelingly of the Excellency of Chastity, one would have taken him for a *Baptist*; yet at the same time he enterain'd a *Miss* in a Corner; and though on Sunday he appear'd in the Church with Respect before the *Lord*, all the Week he paid Homage to the Lady: This is not Virtue, but an *Oleo* of Vices: This is to worship God as the Soldiers did our Saviour, with Outrage and Blasphemy. You may easily infer, that the Duty of a Christian obliges you to detest and abhor such a Conduct, but not to imitate it; one Defect tarnishes Virtue. *Bonum ex integracausa, malum ex quolibet defectu.*

That

That Man is truly Vertuous, who is neither proud in good Fortune, nor abject in bad ; who desires nothing but Heaven, and fears nothing but Hell ; who avenges Affronts with Favours, and Injuries with Pardon ; who is severe to himself, and easie to his Neighbour ; who speaks well of all but himself ; and never pardons his own Defects, nor censures those of his Brethren. In a Word, *Neander, Do good, and fly from Evil*, is the Sum of your Duty. This is Virtue in *Short-Hand*, Perfection in *Epitome*, and Heaven in *Reversion*.

VI.

That Part of your Duty is of the greatest Importance, that immediately belongs to God ; he is our Maker and our Sovereign, we are indebted to his Power for our Being, to his Goodness for our Conservation ; from him we expect the Reward of our Virtues, and the Punishments of our Vices. Return him therefore a thousand Thanks for the Favours you have received from the first Moment of your Creation ; you can't begin the Acknowledgment too soon, you can't repeat it too often, because you can never thank him enough ; respect him as your Father, serve him as your Master, and fear him as your Judge ; neither forget his Kindness in Prosperity, nor blaspheme his Con-

duct in Adversity : He is no less amiable when he frowns, than when he smiles ; when he wounds, than when he heals. And therefore kiss the sacred Hand that strikes, as well as that which stroaks you : He always designs your Good, unless by Murmurs and Impatience you turn his Blessings into Curses ; and then praise his Conduct, but condemn your own.

Ah ! *Neander*, a thousand, thousand times happy is that Man, who flings up all his Concerns into the Hands of Providence, and ties up his Desires to the Laws of Obedience ; he carries in his Breast a little Paradice, and a Heaven in Prospect ; he sits above the reach of Fortune, and beholds with an Air of Unconcernedness under his Feet, all the Storms and Tempests that dash in Pieces other Mens Felicity ; he neither desires good Success, nor fears Disappointment ; he opens his Door no less cheerfully to Want, than to Abundance : *In fine* ; he knows, that Command is God's Prerogative, and Submission his Duty. Can Imagination paint a more solid, a more sincere Satisfaction, than neither to languish under the Torments of Hope, nor to sink under the Billows of Despair, than to subject our Appetite to Reason, and the Will to God, our Omnipotent Maker and Merciful Redeemer ?

Th

This Submission raises Man to the Height of Virtue and Happiness: For whosoever bows his Neck to the sweet Yoak of Providence, neither amuses his Thoughts with visionary Hopes, nor extravagant Fears; he lives on his own Fund, and keeps his Desires within the Compass of his Power; he is content with the Portion God has assign'd him: This he holds only in Fee, and is ready to leave it at the first Command. He neither affects to be less, nor aspires to a higher Station; he would be just as he is, because God has made him so.

Neand. This State of Indifference is a fine thing in *Theory* and *Speculation*, but impossible in *Practice*, and is rather to be wished, than hoped for.

Euseb. Pray remember, that desponding Thoughts only serve to pall the Spirits, and to blast generous Resolutions. Things are often impossible, because Cowardise makes them so: Check Fancy, and you'll not encounter those Difficulties in the Practice; Pusillanimity and Non-Experience conjure up to fright you. For God is no Epicurean Deity, so taken up with the Enjoyment of his own Felicity, that he has no Leisure to cast a Thought on the Concerns of poor Mortals below: No, no, *Neander*; his Providence is as boundless as his Being; he did not de-

vest himself of the Government of the World, when he had made it ; he can't either forfeit his Title to the Administration of the Universe, or abdicate it. That Hand which made all Things, must of Necessity continue 'em, otherwise they'd make a speedy *Exit*, and sink into their primitive *Nothing* : He has assigned *every Being* its Station; even the *Worm* and the *Pismire*, he sets 'em their Task, teaches 'em to work, and through a thousand Labyrinths leads all things to their prefijxt Ends. Now certainly, he that created all sublunary Beings for Man, cannot be thought to withdraw his Care from him as if he were below his Love or Concern No, no ; he counts the Hairs of his Head, and registers his Steps in the *Folio* of his *Omniscience*.

Now God being Goodness it self, he can't wait upon us with an ill Design. He stands over us as a *Guardian*, not as a *Spy* ; as a *Friend*, not as an *Enemy* ; he considers our *Constitution*, and pries into all *Circumstances*, that he may time his Favours, and so enhance their Value, by adapting 'em to our *Necessities*.

As his Goodness assures us he means well so his *Wisdom* gives us Security and Caution that he can't be deceived in the Choice of those things he designs for us ; he can't give

us a Stone for a Loaf, nor a Scorpion for a Fish, nor Poison for a Medicine : So that we are sure on the one side, that nothing befalls us unawares, but either by his Permission or Command ; and on the other, that he either permits or commands it for our Good ; and that it certainly will prove so, unless we defeat his charitable Designs, by Impatience or Blasphemy, and by a strange self-creative Powe turn his Blessings into Curses. Now, what Misfortune can make Impression on a Mind so strongly fenced ? It will stand the most fiery Trial, without an *Oh*, without a *Wry Face* ; for it has both Faith and Reason to support it : And then he that will weep, that has all the Reason in the World to laugh, must be fond of Tears, and in Love with Torment.

It's true, this Doctrine is extinct in Practice : We snarl at Providence, we dispute his Orders, and burlesque his Decrees ; we scream out at the lightest Touch of his gentle Hand, and turn our selves into all the Postures of Impatience ; we neither receive his Favours with Thanks, nor Correction with Patience.

But this irrational Conduct argues much Peevishness, and more Infidelity. For these People must either doubt of his Power, or dare not trust his Goodness ; and then they deny both by Illation.

C. 5. Ah

Ah ! Dear *Neander*, commit your Concerns to the Management of God ; ask no temporal Blessing, but with a *fiat voluntaria* ; refuse no Affliction ; receive that with Gratitude, this with Resignation ; and if you can't desire Crosses, at least accept 'em, and remember always, that those things often prove more prejudicial we pray for, than those we fear.

We are an *America*, an undiscovered Region to our selves, our Desires fly not only before Reason, but Reflection ; so that we are so far from knowing what is good for us, that we know not what we would be at. Our Fancy over-shoots Nature, and (like a Fool's Paradise) represents Objects in borrowed Colours and false Shapes : Deluded therefore by vain *Glasses* and deceitful *Opticks* we dote by Hazard, and hate at Random we embrace a deformed *Leah* for a charming *Rachel* ; court Happiness, and espouse Misery. But God, who built our Fabrick, knows our Constitution ; he dives into our Temper, and comprehends all those things we either eagerly pursue, or passionately fly from. He sees the Employment of these will convey us to Eternal Felicity, and the Possession of those into Endless Torments. He therefore gives what we feared, and refuses what we desired. Now, is it not a Kindness to

be thus mercifully cruel? Is it not a Favour to bauk our Pretensions? and a real Misfortune to be fortunate?

VII.

We can never withdraw our selves from God's Immensity: He reigns in Hell no less than in Heaven; he exercises his Justice among the Damned, and his Mercy among the Blessed; he dwells in Woods, and walks in Cities; he retires with us into Solitude, and accompanies in Conversation; he is in all Places, and sees all Things; he fathoms our Desires, he counts our Words, he scans our Actions, and reads our Thoughts.

Imprint this Truth with indelible Characters in your Memory, and recommend it to your daily Consideration; 'twill teach you both Caution and Respect; 'twill curb the disorderly Sallies of Nature, and bind our Passion to its good Behaviour. You will not have the Face to step beyond the Bounds of Duty, nor scarce be tempted to transgress it. Nature, I confess, is unruly, 'twill run away with us, unless we keep a strong and watchful Hand over it; but then the very Thought that God stands by, will blow over those Fames of Passion, that dim Reason, and us into Transgressions.

Before

Before a grave Man we dare not fall into Indecency ; his very Presence gives a Check to Appetite, and stops Sensuality in its full Career : So that Lewdness and Debauchery are forc'd to retire, and to give Place to Shame.

Who violates the Law in the Face of Authority, that has both Will and Power to revenge the Contempt, gives an evident Proof, that either Life is uneasy to him, or that he is not *compos mentis*, and by Consequence deserves *Bedlam* rather than *Tyburn*. Yet human Justice acts in a narrow Sphere ; it reaches but to Life, and can't pursue the Criminal beyond the Grave. If therefore the Sight of a Man, and the Apprehension of Death, have such a Transcendency over us, as to cool the Fire of Passion, to discountenance an unbeseeming Sally, and to repeal any Assault upon our Virtue ; certainly, a strong Persuasion, that God is present, that he looks on us to crown our Virtues, and to chastise our Vices, can't be less efficacious ; for he is Sovereign Disposer of our Souls and Bodies ; he is able to tumble these into *nothing*, and those into *Hell* ; we may baffle human Justice, either by Flight, Money, or Favours, but we cannot fly out of God's Dominion ; his Anger can neither be appeased with Bribes, nor softened with Tears, nor overcome with Entreaties.

Now,

Now, a Man who with the Eyes of Faith continually beholds this dreadful Majesty hovering about him, with the Reward of Virtue in one Hand, and the Sword of Revenge in the other, will take Care of his Behaviour, and not sell his Innocence for a Fleet Pleasure in Hand, and Eternal Torments in Remainder. Let me therefore once more intreat you (by all that is Dear, by all that is Sacred) to carry this Consideration along with you in all our Business, in all your Pastimes, its Company will neither be troublesome nor expensive, but I am sure it will be advantageous.

VIII.

God's Infinite Greatness entitles him to Homage, and our Dependance calls upon us to pay it: We cannot acknowledge too soon his Authority, because we cannot respect it too much: We are the Work of his Hands, the Object of his Mercy, and shall once be Eternally that of his Love or of his Hatred; of his Love, if we execute his Commands; but of his Hatred, if we transgress 'em. Justice therefore and Gratitude; Hope of Heaven, and Fear of Hell, preach Virtue and Obedience to his most Holy Injunctions. Yet D—n—s ! this Voice of Thunder is not able to awake our young Gallants. (Like so many nor bewitched *Sampsons*) they sleep in the Bosom of

of fascinating Pleasures, that lull 'em into pleasing Trances, imaginary Delights, to plunge 'em into real Torments. One would think they either disbelieved a *future State*, they are so unconcerned for the *present*; or that they had a *Patent* to do ill; or at least an *Assurance* of *Pardon* and *Repentance*. Their Study is to learn *Sins*; their Employment to commit 'em, and grand Diversion to applaud their *Impieties*. Tell these deluded Creatures they walk over Precipices, and sport on the Brink of *Destruction*: That to live a *Debauchè*, is to die a *Reprobate*. They answer your charitable *Admonition* with a *Joak*, or a *Frown*, and very coldly reply, That *Youth* was made for *Pleasure*, and *Old Age* for *Repentance*. Good God! that Men of *Wit* and *Parts* should so wretchedly fool themselves into *Ruin*. Were our *Souls* no longer lived than our *Bodies*, did they sink into nothing when we ceased to breath, that *Atheistical Rant*, *Ede, bibe, gaude, cras moriemur*, would not be quite unreasonable. Could we look into the *Future*, and read our *Destiny*; could we cast up a *Horoscope* of our *Death*, as *Astrologers* do of our *Life*; were we sure that *cras moriemur*, we might equip our selves to *Day* for a *Journey* to *Hell*; and make *tomorrow* as great *Preparations* for *Heaven*.

Bu

But alas ! we dwell in a Region, where Certainties are so twisted with Uncertainties, that though we know we must die, yet we are as ignorant of the Time, Place and Manner, as the Child unborn, Perchance Divine Justice may arrest us in the very Heat of our Lewdnes ; it may drag us from the Stews to Judgment : The first time we close our Eye-lids may be the last : We may only sleep in this World to wake in the next ; we may only open our Eyes to see strange Flames, and return to our Senses to feel 'em.

Sudden Deaths are not miraculous : The Bills of Mortality assure us they are too ordinary : But these Accidents surprize your Debauchees oftner, than those who live within the Bounds of Temperance and Moderation. They over-charge Nature with continual Excess, and set all the Humour of the Body in an Uproar : And how easie is it for these Humours in such a Hurry and Tumult, to crowd in upon the Heart ? or to fly up to the Brain ? or to impede the playing of the Lungs, and on a sudden stop Respiration ?

But though God should deal more mercifully with these Men than they deserve, tho' he should give 'em both Time and Leisure to repent, it's ten to one they'll die in their Sins, and carry into the next World those Crimes they committed in this. For

For two things are necessary for a thorough Repentance ; God's Grace, and Man's Cooperation ; without that we cannot repent, and without this he will not pardon. If therefore the Difficulty to be overcome be greater at threescore, than at twenty, and Grace be less, it's odds they'll not repent at threescore, but *that* certainly will be greater, and *this* infallibly will be less : Therefore its odds, that the final Resolutions of these unfortunate Gentlemen will vanish into Smoak, and end in eternal Despair and Punishment.

I prove the Difficulty will certainly be greater. Philosophy and Experience teach us, that a frequent Relapse into any Disorder engenders a Habit, (that is) a Facility and Propension to reiterate the same Actions. And this takes its Force from the Frequency of the Practice : For though in natural Productions there is a certain Point of Growth and Perfection, yet in Morals there is no such Term ; both vicious and virtuous Habits may go on *in infinitum* : Hence It happens, that an inveterate Custom twists and winds it self into our very Nature ; it sinks into our Bones, and enters into our Constitution. Now, if all the frightful Reproaches of Conscience, all the Calls of Grace, the dismal Prospect of those Shades below, the charming

charming Allurements of Heaven above, were too feeble to restrain Nature alone ; will they silence the Clamors of mutinous Passions, curb the Violence of Nature back'd by Custom, and inflamed with ill Habits ? No, no : Nature seconded by a Habit, (like a Load-stone armed with Iron) draws ten times stronger. He who groans under the Weight of a Feather, will fall under that of a Mill-stone.

Now, as ill Habits byas Nature, and make it more impetuous, and less governable ; so in our Supposition, *Grace* the chief active Principle, is less. For *Grace* is a free Gift, no Debt, *aliter Gratia non effet* ; we must receive it as a meer Benevolence, and cannot ask it as our Due.

Is it probable God will pour down upon his mortal Enemies these Streams of Favour and Bounty, as plentifully as on his Friends ? on those who blaspheme him twenty Years together, as on those, who adore him ? on those, who abandon their Duty out of a determinate Malice, as on those, who fall by Surprize ? It's certain he will not : *For God will not be laught at* ; and can the Wit of Man invent a more compendious, and at the same time a more biting Rallery, than by trampling under Foot this Divine Gift, that cost our great Redeemer Torrents of Sweat, and Rivers,

Rivers of Blood ? than by making his Goodness the Ground of our Ingratitude ? than by refusing to repent, because he is prone to pardon ? If God be just, (as certainly he is) he'll stop the Conduct of his Mercy, and rain down a Deluge of Maledictions on those rebellious Giants, that attack the most High, and turn his greatest Attributes against his own Breast.

Neand. What you say (as to the main) is true ; but give me leave to tell you, there is a dash of Hyperboly in your Discourse : Man's Malice can't weary God's Mercy ; he can pardon more Sins than Man is able to commit ; nay, and will, if we fling ourselves at his Feet, and sue for Mercy. A contrite Heart, *Eusebius*, is a moving Spectacle, it disarms God's Justice, and melts it into Mercy ; and as he receives those Prodigals that return, so he furnishes 'em with Grace for their Voyage.

Euseb. *Neander*, God's Goodness weighs down Man's Malice ; our Obstinacy can't tire his Mercy ; he'll give both Pardon and Heaven to those who ask 'em ; his Word stands engaged, and he can't fly back. But then, where has he promised that inveterate Sinners shall ask Pardon ? It's true also, that the most profligate Debauchees have Grace sufficient to work Repentance. But what signifies

signifies a Power to do good, with a Will to do Evil ? There is not a damned Soul in Hell, that did not once find it self in the same Circumstances. Is it less miserable, because once it might have been happy ? Alas ! this sad Meditation suggests new Matter to their Despair, because it represents their Misery, together with their Folly, the Sole Cause of their Misfortune.

Nean. Pray, *Eusebius*, don't disgrace God's darling Virtue, *Mercy*; nor condemn poor Sinners to the worst of Torments, Despair. *Whilst there is Life, there is Hope*, They who never thought of Pardon in their Lives, found it at their Death. What ? he who died for Man, can he have the Heart to damn him ? The very Thief on the Cross, though abandoned by Men, was caref's'd by his loving Saviour ; and for one humble *mememto mei*, received Mercy in this World, and Paradise in the other.

Euseb. Mistake me not, (Dear *Neander*) I am not for grasping an Immensity, nor for prescribing Bounds to an infinite Being ; I know God's Mercy is above the Skies : But then his Justice sinks below the Abyss ; *judicia ejus abyssus multa*. We can't take the Hight of that, nor fathom the Depth of this. They are both equal, (i. e.) infinite ; nay, they are the same thing : For Justice is Mercy,

cy, armed with Revenge, and Mercy is Justice, disposed to Pardon: Why then should we dread it in one Dress, as well as dote on it in the other? I am not for casting Men into Despair. As it is the greatest of Torments, so it's the blackest of Crimes, and the most irrational: This antedates Damnation, and gives us over to Execution before God has pronounced the Sentence. To damn our selves out of a Fear of being damned, is the Top of Madness; the *non plus ultra* of Frensy, to think my Salvation impossible, is to make it so; not to hope for Heaven, is the next Way to lose it. But then if I hate Despair, I abhor Presumption; if that leads us to Hell by a direct Line, this does the Business as efficaciously. For can we outrage our great Master more, than when we bend his august Attributes to our Lewdness? and build the Babel of our Abominations upon his Goodness? and our Crimes upon his Mercy? Is not this to sport with Majesty? to rally Authority? and to play with Goodness? And pray what Difference is there between desparring of Mercy, and burlesquing it? This impious Mirth, (*Neander*) will once end in Sorrow, and these Peals of Laughter, in gnashing of Teeth: But because our Libertines put a great Stress on the good Thief's Conversion, and

and fancy their Deaths will resemble his, no less than their Lives ; 'twill not be amiss to examine the Point.

First. St. Bernard tells us, that this Thief's Conversion is the only Example (to be found in Scripture) of a deferred Repentance that was successful. But, with Submission, St. Bernard mistook in the Calculation : For this was not properly a deferred Repentance. The Thief answer'd the first Call of his agonizing Saviour ; the first Glance of his Sacred Eyes wounded his sinful Soul, and melted his hard Heart into Love and Sorrow.

Secondly. The Theif received Pardon and Paradise : But what did he to deserve this miraculous Favour ? He adored Christ, not seated on a Throne of Glory, but covered with Shame and Infamy ; torn with Whips, pierced with Thorns, outraged by his Enemies, forsaken by his Friends : Besides some say, Life was offered this Malefactor, if he would deny Christ : But he chose rather to die with him, and for him, than to live without him. So that now the Cause of his Death was changed, and he, who was fastned to the Cross a Robber, expired on it a Martyr.

Thirdly. God sealed his Pardon ; but this Act of Grace was granted on the Day of Mercy ; and yet of so many Sinners that were Spectators of this bloody Tragedy, we know

know but this Thief, who was so fortunate as to ask Pardon, and to receive it. Tell me then, Dear *Neander*, ought we not rather draw Motives of Fear from the Misfortune of thousands, than of Presumption from the good Luck of one? If you look on the right Hand of our dying Lord, pray cast an Eye upon the left; and if you behold on the one side a Saint, you'll discover a Reprobate on the other. Let therefore Gentlemen learn Fear from the Damnation of the one, as well as from the other a dangerous Security. And I counsel all Christians to draw this Conclusion from the different Deaths of these two Malefactors, that it's a Madness to despair, and Temerity to presume; *unus est ne disperes, unicus ne presumas.*

Wherefore consecrate the first Fruits of Reason to God; you can't begin the Practice of Piety too soon, but may too late; Nature untainted with Vice may be wrought with ease into any Form, and cast in any Mould. It's a kind of *tabula rasa*, a Blank That that almost with the same Facility receives the Characters of *Angel*, and of *Devil*; but the when once it's stained with Sin, when it's besotted by ill Habits, and worse Principles, you will find it stubborn and rebellious. Be not then so foolish as to prefer Danger before Security, and to turn Pleasure into Toil.

*Turc
Takeble,*

Take Occasion by the *Fore-top*, it quickly passes, and seldom returns.

IX.

Religion is the Ground-work of Salvation; and therefore you can't be too tender of a thing that so nearly concerns your eternal Happiness. I recommend this Point to your Care with greater Eagerness, because at present it lies under all the Disadvantage of Contempt, and I fear the Gentry have a greater Hand in the Scandal, than the Commonalty. Nothing, indeed, enters more frequently in Discourse; it's the vulgar Topic of Conversation, the Subject of our Heats, the Source of Divisions, and by Consequence of our Misfortunes: Yet not one of a hundred knows the very Meaning of the Word, and not two in a thousand agree upon the thing; the very Idea's we have of it are wild and monstrous.

I have heard with Indignation and Horror, some Gentlemen pronounce *ex Cathedra*, That Religion is a Grievance, no Duty, because it controuls our most nobly Faculty, the Understanding, and enslaves us to blind Obedience.

Others weigh Religion by Interest, and protest, that *Orthodoxy* and Profit go together: So that in those Mens Theology *Tolurcism*, with a 1000 per ann. is more creditable, than Christianity with 500. Others

Others again confound Religion with Faction, and so to carry a black Design strike in with any Conventicle, they cry out for Liberty of Conscience, although they have none for Reformation, though they delight in Tumults, and feign the *Angel* to play the *Fiend*.

Others, like an abandon'd Brat, drop it at Church-mens Doors, and fancy it's a Monster of their Begetting. *Craft*, (say they) *Jugling* and *Interest* brought it forth, whilst Superstition and Policy maintains it.

But by these Gentlemens leave, Religion is neither the Product of Spleen, nor the Fruit of Imagination ; its neither a *Statist's* Engine, nor a *Parson's* Invention ; it came from Heaven, and was planted on Earth by Christ and his Apostles ; and we must either believe it *here*, or burn for our Infidelity *hereafter* ; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

These are our Saviour's Words, and they will be received, I suppose, by Christians. The Apostle delivers the same Doctrine ; *Without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Now without doubt God made Heaven for his Friends, not for his Enemies : for those who please him, not for those who contemn his Laws, and sport with his most peremptory Commands,

Command. Again St. *Augustin* tells us,
* *Ubi vera fides non est, nec patesc vera esse iustitia.* But ti's Frenzy and Illusion to excess, to fancy, that a Man not truly just will be admitted into the eternal Joys of Heaven; it follows therefore very Justly that Salvation is a Chymæra out of Christ's Church, and by consequence, that all those Libertine Gentlemen, who play with Religion, and sport with Faith, are in a fair way to deplore eternally their factious Impiety. I would have 'em spend some cool Thoughts on the Matter, and consider seriously, whether a Petty, Brutish, nay, Atheistical Satisfaction can countervail a perpetual Misery, and whether they would not give more pregnant Proofs of Wit and Judgment by enquiring after the true Religion, than by lampooning all.

Tell me not you lead a moral Life, you walk by the Light of Reason, and frame your Conduct by its inviolable Maxims ; that you neither curse God, nor wrong your Neighbour ; that you neither invade his Lands, nor impeach his Reputation ; that your Hands are not dipt in Blood, nor your Tongue in Gall ; that you defile no Man's Bed, nor encroach on his Property : These Negatives will never unlock Heaven's Gate,

E nor

* De Ser. Dei in monte. C. 19.

nor place you in Bliss. Faith must carry a Torch before you, otherwise you'll ramble in the Dark, and wander in Error, till the Flames of Hell display the Mistake, and at the same time punish it.

But do you think, *Neander*, that those Men, who talk down Religion, and cry up Morals, are at the Bottom greater Friends to the one, than to the other? Alas! no; their Actions are as libertine as their Beliefs; and if we may judge by Appearance, they have no more of the Man, than of the Christian: For whoever saw these mighty Advocates of Morals, these Assertors of Regularity, ever stand up in Defence of Virtue, but when they actually condemn'd it in Practice? I have often indeed heard your qualified Debbauchees talk most feelingly of Sobriety over *Champagne*, of Temperance at a full Table: And I once met with a Prostitute, that extolled Chastity like a *Vestal*. You must therefore, when you meet with infidel Moralists suppose, they only commend Virtue in jest, but practise Vice in good Earnest, and that they are as far from enslaving their Passion, than to the Laws of Nature, as their Judgment is to Divine Revelation.

Take not Religion upon Credit; there are ~~and~~ ^{and} pray in the World Teachers of false Tenets, as *Neander*, well as Coiners of false Crowns; and as you are ~~and~~ ^{and} bri-

bring these to the Touch-Stone, so you must bring those. To believe, you know not why, is rather Stupidity than Faith; it's to unfence Religion, to lay it open to the weakest Assault of Schism and Heresy. In fine, to believe nothing, is Madness, and to believe any thing, Folly. He is truly happy who walks between these two Extreams, and neither believes too much nor too little.

X.

The Religion you must embrace, is that which Christ revealed, and his Apostles preach'd: This may be denied by a Jew or Turk, but not by a Christian. For, being God, he had Authority to command, and we have an indispensable Obligation to obey; nor could he set up Impostures for Truths, or impose Falshood under the Mask of divine Revelation. The Apostles indeed were Men, but inspired from Heaven, and consequently no more subject to Error, than the divine Spirit that gave his Oracles through the Organs of their Mouths.

This is a Summary of your Duty to God, that you owe your Neighbour shall be the Subject of our next Entertainment. In the mean time you must be my Guest to Day, and pray refuse me not the Favour.

Near. I am at your Command; but let me desire you to give me these excellent Documents

in writing ; they are too long to be remem-
ber'd, and too useful to be forgot.

Euseb. I'll comply with your Desires, and
at my Leisure set down what I can call to
Memory.

DIALOGUE IV.

*Whether Gentlemen are obliged to practise
Virtue.*

“ **S**Carce was Dinner ended, but in came
“ *Eleutherius* an Acquaintance of *Euse-
bius* ; he was a Gentleman of a worthy Fa-
“ mily, and of an Estate suitable to his Cha-
“ racter. Liberty and Pleasure were his dar-
“ ling Passions ; and I have heard him say,
“ he had rather want Grace than Wit, al-
“ though he had no great Provision of either.
“ He could not endure to be crowded with
“ Visits, or yoak'd in Ceremony, because
“ such Formalities entrench'd on Freedom
“ and put Liberty under Constraint ; and for
“ this reason he never went to Court : Forose
“ he compared Courtiers to so many Slaves born
“ who move in Fetters, and live for others
“ not for themselves ; sometimes to work'd
“ down Labourers, more fit for Sleep than
“ Pleasure

"Pleasure. In fine, he valued Ease above
"Greatness, and Sensuality above Consci-
"ence, so that his Name jumpt with his Hu-
"mour; his Religion was of the last Edition,
"that is, *Puritanism* cut on *Independency*, and
"garnish'd with an *Oleo* of upstart Novelties;
"he ascribed Man's Justification to Faith a-
"lone, and therefore condemn'd good Works
"as *Heterodox*, as Encroachments upon Chri-
"stian Liberty, and Grievances to the Sub-
"ject: Hence he hated Humiliation-Days,
"and could never be persuaded to fast, till he
"had regaled his Appetite. One Day he mo-
"ved that the Statute *de comburendo Hæretico*
"might be reviv'd, and executed upon a
"Person, for saying that *estote perfecti* was ad-
"dressed to Gentlemen; he look'd upon it
"as a *scandalum magnatum*, and a clipping of
"the Privilege of Peerage. In fine, he
"was of Opinion, that Fancy was the only
"Rule of a Gentleman's Faith, and Pleasure
"with that of his Actions.

Euseb. Welcome, *Eleutherius*, pray sit down.
"Why so thoughtful and recollect'd? I sup-
": pose you are come from your Devotions,
"Slaves Morning-Service is just done.

Eleuthe. Why, Man, this is not the Lord's Day.
Euseb. Pray of what Religion are you?
Eleuthe. I am a Christian.

Euseb. Ay, that may be, but of what Persuasion? For that Notion reaches a great way: There are *Christian Papists*, *Christian Turks*, and *Christian Infidels*; and then there are *Protestants*, and *True Protestants*; and in fine, there are *Etcetera Christians*, with which of these do you convene?

Eleuthe. With all, and with neither, that is, I have drawn off the Spirits from each, and left the *Caput mortuum* behind; in short, my Religion is new and modish: 'Tis grinded at indeed by some, but practised by the greater and more witty Part of the Nobility; 'tis Reformation upon Reformation.

Euseb. Mettle upon Mettle, is a Solecism in *Heraldry*, and why not Reformation upon Reformation in Religion? but under Favour if general Practice hits right with the Precepts of your Religion, they are Fly-blown; and were I disposed to dogrel it, I would only gloss upon that Text. Follow my Counsel, *Eleutherius*; say common Practice clashes with its Maxims, or else you'll give too great an Advantage to Criticism and Enquiry. For if what you say be true, your Religion is without Fence, without Rampart, and a little Reason will batter the whole Fabrick about your Ears; for when the Question is about good and evil, Practice stands on the wrong side. But, Sir, let us wave Dis-

pute;

pute ; supposing you are a Christian, what Harm is there in going to Church on a *Feria* ?

Eleuthe. What Harm is it to sink my Character, and fling up my *Charter* ?

Euseb. Why Praying and good Works come not within the Statute of Treason, I hope ?

Eleuthe. Take care, you may slip into a Premure before you are aware. Liberty and Property are edged Tools now a days, few have meddled with them without a Scar.

Euseb. You are in a very merry Vein to Day, but methinks the Subject bears no Rallery. Prithee (Drollery apart) what do you mean by *Liberty*, *Property*, and *Premunire* ?

Eleuthe. In short then Gentlemen are not tied up to Works of *Supererogation*, to Virtue, Perfection, and twenty other Niceties ; all the World knows that Christians are free-born Subjects, exempt from the Bondage of Precept and Ceremony. They date their Liberty from the Moment of their Baptism ; and a Learned Clerk, let me tell you, was of Opinion, that the very Ten Commandments expired with the Synagogue. Now, Sir, to bring Gentlemen upon their Knees to incumber their Liberty with Laws and Statutes, is to touch 'em in the most sensible Part. *Englishmen* will stand for their Birth-right, and not give up tamely so considera-

ble a Priviledge ; and if you strive to wrest it out of their Hands, you may perchance repent of the Attempt. You will have to do with Numbers and Power : and though Truth stands for you, if Force sides against you, the Field will be lost.

Neand. This is Liberty indeed with a Vengeance. Nature at this rate, and Sensuality, are let loose, and have a large Field to walk in. Because Christ came into the World to banish Sin, Man may open the Gate to all Abominations ; he may break through all the Barriers of Nature, Reason and Religion ; he may chosen and murder not only with Impunity, but also with Devotion. I would have you draw up a Petition against Goals, Pillories, and Execution ; nay, it would not be amiss at your next *Coffee-House-Assembly*, to vote down Hell also as a Grievance to the freeborn Subjects of the *Covenant*.

Eleuth. Nay, indeed the Parson strain'd the Point, he has overshot the Truth and himself too ; But I'll maintain at least, that Gentlemen are not bound up to what Divines call *Virtue and Perfection* ; these Fooleries look well enough in a Canonical Cassock, or Clergyman's Dress, but in Scarlet and Gold Lace, they make a lean Figures they walk in Embroidery, as little *David* did in *Saul's* Armour, very awkwardly, and rather fun-

dish Matter for Diversion, than for Edification.

Euseb. Though this *Thesis* has less of Scandal than the former, I am sure 'tis equally false. For tell me, have not our Gentlemen and topping Mortals received from the Liberal Hands of God, a far greater Allowance of Favour, than Vulgars?

Eleuth. No doubt of it; Nobility it self is a Favour of the first Class; it raises a Man above the Croud and Smoak of the World, it entitles him to Honour and Respect; the Prince moves here below, as the Sun does above in Glory and Magnificence; Gentlemen are Stars placed about him for Pomp, State and Ornament; besides, Gentlemens Bodies have a finer Texture of Parts, than those of a meaner Condition; their Complexion is more bright and sprightly; their Air more polite; In fine, Nature is like Carvers, who flubber over those Pieces that are condem'd to Obscurity, and polish those with the last Exactness that stand in View.

Euseb. You argue right for me; but then you confute your own *Thesis*. For if Gentlemen have received more Favours than the peasant, certainly they are oblig'd in Honour as well as Duty, to make a more ample Return of Gratitude. For, suppose a Prince is raised one from the Degree of a Page to

that of a *Lord* or Captain of his Guards, that he has at the same time flung in 12000 per ann. to support the Title, and set off his Dignity ; has not this new dated *Peer* a more strait Obligation to serve his Royal Benefactor, than a *Dray-man*, that only enjoys the common Protection of the Government ? This is our Case to a Hair. You grant on the one Hand, that such a Man lies not only under the common and fundamental Duties of a Subject, but also under the additional Ties of Gratitude to serve his Prince ; and on the other you confess, that God has with greater Profuseness pour'd out his *Liberality* on Gentlemen, than on Clowns and Tradesmen ; why then is not their Obligation greater to serve him ?

Eleuth. Their very Station and Rank, is their Patent of Exemption ; in short, they have no time : For you must allow a Gentleman Ten Hours for Sleep, a Quarter for his private Affairs, Two Hours to saunter from the Stable to the Dog-kennel ; Three for Dinner, and as many for Supper ; almost Six for the Tavern, Coffee-house and Theatre ; so that you may see here remains no time for God and Virtue.

Euseb. Your *Arithmetick*, overballances your Christianity. Is it not ridiculous, (I mean impious) to take the length of a Man's Duty by his Practice, to argue from

Fall

Fact to Right, and Subpene Transgression to witness for the Breach of a Precept? You have carv'd out a Gentleman's Time exactly enough, but not justly; and I doubt much whether he will stand to it in the next World tho' he may perchance in this. God bids 'um watch and pray in the Gospel; and St. Paul in his Epistle recommends Sobriety and Chastity. Now I think Men seldom watch or pray while they sleep, and as seldom learn Sobriety in Taverns, or Chastity in Brochels, or Morality in profligate Conversation; tell me then not what Gentlemen do, but what they should do; which in short is this: As they have but one Affair to manage, which is their Salvation, so all their Thoughts and Actions must look that Way; if any Motion warps from this Center, they swerve from their Duty; they must balk Appetite, not gratify it; and either stifle Passions, or fetter 'um; they must be humble in Prosperity, and great in Adversity, (i. e.) they must bear that with Moderation, this without Clamours or Impatience; they must rather forfeit their Lives than Conscience, and postpone Pleasure to their Duty. These are the Offices of Gentlemen: For Men were plac'd in this World to cultivate Virtue, and to enjoy the Fruit of it hereafter; tho' they labour and sweat from the Cradle to the Coffin.

fin, to advance their temporal Concerns : they forward their Misery, and interrupt their Happiness; they are Strangers to themselves, and only Guests in their own House ; they drudge continually, yet do nothing, and so are laboriously idle. Tell me not then of *Sleep, Visits, Horses, Hounds, Taverns, and Play-Houses* ; these things, with some Grains of Allowance, may be permitted Gentlemen as Amusements and Diversions, but not as Business ; their Business, their grand Concern, and their only Concern, is God's Service, and their Salvation ; and if they squander the precious Moments of Time he has afforded them, they abuse the Gift and the very End of their Creation.

Eleuth. You are warm, methinks, and press very hard on Quality ; but I suppose you are only in the Vein of Bantering, and intend to shew how well you can manage an ill Cause, and that Wit and Declamation can sometimes supply the Place of Reason and Argument ; thou art excellently qualified for the Pulpit ; thou hast Words and Invective at Command ; prithee off with thy *Jump*, and on with a *Cassock* ; thou wilt run down Vice at an unmerciful Rate, and talk *Debauchery* out of Countenance ; no Sin will stand thee, no Heresy affront thee ; but by the by, *Eusebius*, you are subject to slip through

as well as your Neighbour ; and sometimes your Passion runs so fast, that it distances your Reason : For I think you grant that the bare Observation of God's Commandments will carry a Man to Heaven, what then have we to do with your Works of Supererogation, Mortification, and Austerities ? The very Word implies Counsel only, not a Precept, and by Consequence no Obligation.

Enseb. I grant what you desire, but then I must add, that without these Works of Supererogation, as you call 'um, you'll never keep those Commandments. You can't hit a Mark, unles you level higher. Gravity sinks the Arrow under the first Line of Direction in Spight of the Impulse. This is our Case, Nature draws towards the Center, no less than Weight ; 'tis wanton and libertine, and loves to range in the Latitude of sensual Pleasure, not within the Compass of Law and Regularity. Now, if you loose the Rein, and give it the whole Line of Duty to play in, 'twill break through that Restraint, and carry you beyond it. For let me tell you, Appetite is not caressed into Duty, but beaten into it ; and Passions are lik not to be tam'd by Condescendence. Like the Mobile, the more Liberty you give 'um, the more they ask ; they must be dieted and brought low, otherwise they'll fly in your Face.

Face. In fine, if you will not have 'um, ask what is unjust, refuse 'um what is lawful ; besides, Indulgence arms 'um, it gives 'um a Prospect of their own Power and your Weakness ; and then if each single be a Match for a *Gyant*, who can resist the whole Band drawn up in a Body ? You boggle at great Sins, but swallow little ones without Scruple or Remorse ; you shut your Ears against the inward Calls of God's Grace, and struggle with his Inspirations. All these things are petty Quarrels with your Maker ; they are Contempts and Disrespects, tho' not Treasons. In fine, they are Sins. Now, whosoever dare look a little Sin in the Face without Horror, will soon commit great ones with Pleasure ; for they are both really Sins, and must be repented of ; the Difference lies only in the Greatness on the one side, and in the Littleness on the other. When *Marius* was sent against the *Cimbri*, his Soldiers durst not look the Enemy in the Face ; their Gyantick Stature and Barbarous Aspect cow'd the *Roman* Bravery : But when they had beheld these barbarous *Germans* three Days from the Camp, their Spirits reviv'd, and their concealed Courage began to circulate through humps every Vein ; they not only fought 'um, but overcame. Just so a Man educated in the Principles of Christianity, cannot think of supposin

the

the Breach of a Commandment without trembling, without Convulsions ; but then he slides into trivial Commissions : At first, a Damp rises over his Stomach, he is crop-sick, uneasie, he continues on his Course, and Conscience begins to slumber ; its Reproaches are faint ; its Strings scarce perceptible ; Custom flings in a Dose of *Opium*, and then it falls into a Lethargy ; and when Man is once arrived at this Pitch of Insensibility, he boggles at no Impiety ; he breaks through God's Commands, and will storm Hell to satisfie Passion. From whence comes this, but from your Principle, that *Gentlemen are not tied up to Virtue, Patience, Humility* ? For, did such Gentlemen mortifie Appetite, and crush Sensuality in the Cradle ; did they place all their Satisfactions in an absolute Obedience to their Maker's Will, and never allow Nature and Senses any Play-days, they would not have broke open the Inclosures of Duty, nor left all in common to Licentiousnes ; they had never made their Inclinations their Law, nor Pleasures the sole Boundaries of their Actions : For that Aphorism is most true, *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*, no Body jumps into Ill on the suddain ; Negligence, and Distrust, weaken God's Commands, before we venture to break 'em. Now, of supposing all Men are oblig'd to Virtue, it natu-

naturally follows, that this Obligation lies harder on Gentlemen.

First, they lie more in the Reach of Temptation, than People of an inferiour Rank; more in View of the Enemy; their Circumstances then require Vigilance; they must stand Centinel, and place Out-Guards for fear of a Surprize. A poor Man, that can scarce furnish Necessaries for Life, has neither the Means nor Thought to pamper Luxury; Nature is work'd down, and rather cries out for Rest than Pleasure. In short, he can scarce live, much less riot; Pride can't come at him, it must pass through Muck, Smoak, and Penury to reach him. Now, this Vice is too high stomach'd to stoop so low, it loves not to lie on a Dung-hil, or sleep on Straw; and a man that daily sees and feels nothing but Want and Mifery, must be mad before he can be proud, or grow vain upon any fond Presumption: Besides, Appetite is so kept under by Necessity, that it can scarce crawl; its very Desires reach no higher than Bread to subdue Hunger; and Cloaths, to fence off Cold, and vail Nakedness. No ill Object passes through the poor Man's Eyes into the Heart; they draw in no Species but those of Beasts and Dung-hils; so that whatever they behold is either rebating or innocent. In fine, they are be-

low

low Temptation, and like a small dismantled Village, not worth seizing. But Gentlemen stand the Mark of every Temptation, the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*, seem to have enter'd a triple League against them ; they are mark'd out for Slaughter and Sacrifice ; they live in the midst of Plague and Infection, and can't take one Step without meeting Danger, nor breath without taking in Contagion ; the *World* fawns on them ; Passions revolt, and the *Devil* casts Nets to ensnare them ; fine Sights debauch the Eyes, Musick the Ears, *Ragou's* the Taste, Perfumes the Smell, and false Principles the Understanding ; Wine heats the Passions, and Delicacies put 'um in a Ferment ; so that a Gentleman is beset on all fides ; each Vice batters his Constancy, and assaults his Innocence. Now, what Way can he come off with Victory ? He must raise Counter-Batteries, and dismount those Engines that play upon him ; he must make a Sally, and face Pride with Humility, Luxury with Continency, Intemperance with Sobriety, and Love of Pleasure with that of Duty : In Morals as well as Physicks Contraries alone defeat Contraries. Does not Nature tell us, as well as Experience, that when the Attack is brisk and vigorous, the Place will infallibly be taken, unless the Defendant beat off Force with Force,

Force, and tire out the Assailants with Resolution.

Secondly. The Faults of the baser sort of Mankind are *Personal*; they never spread; like an *Apoplexy* they strike but one; the Mischief ends where it begun, and one Life satisfies its Fury. But Gentlemen's Crimes become universal, like the Plague they sweep away whole Families, and drive Mortality and Desolation before 'em. For the Vulgar are an apish Generation, they live on Imitation, and are carried away by the Example of Great ones, as the inferior Orbs by the Motion of the superior; so that if a Master throws his Vices among the Family, they are soon pick'd up, and wore as Robes of Honour. For Servants that know their Fortune depends on a Master's Smile, will not easily displease him: They eye every Motion, study his Humour, and strike in with his Inclination: They applaud his Extravagancies first, and then adopt them by Practice. And thus by this abominable Complaisance, Slaves oftentimes work themselves into their Masters Favours, and not seldom into their Estates and Dignities. And then when Vice is so extravagantly rewarded, both with Estate and Pleasure, when a Man can debauch himself into a competent Fortune, without other Charges or Expence, than that of Conscience, 'tis odds

he'll venture on the Entreprise. Besides, Sins supported with *Escutcheon* and Title pass for Grandeur: Nay, and Vice at the Head of a pompous Retinue is often mistaken for Virtue. For the Vulgar judge by the Eyes, not by Reason; and whatever appears great, they conclude *good*, as if Glittering and Value were Synonymous. Who has spread this Illusion through the whole Mass of these Mortals, but the Nobility? Gentlemen therefore, besides the direct Obligation of Obedience they owe to God, they lie under a collateral one of Charity towards their Neighbours, and by Consequence, their Failings carry Scandal along with 'um, as well as Disobedience; so that every Crime they commit, may be call'd *Legion*.

Eleuthe. 'Tis time to take a little Breath, you'll over-heat your Lungs, and discompose your *Fabrick*. But pray, Sir, under Favour, are Masters *Goalers ex officio*? or must they be Bayl for their Servants good Behaviour?

Enseb. No, but then they must not be their Murderers.

Eleuthe. Why I suppose you don't intend to cast scandalous Reflexions upon the whole Progeny of Masters? Have a care they may bring an Action of Calumny against you; 'tis dangerous for a single Man to engage with Numbers.

En'se.

Euseb. Let us not dispute of the Name, I say you stab Souls; if this be not Murder, 'tis something worse, and if our Laws take no Cognizance of it, God's do.

Eleuthe. What Masters must play the Chaplains to their Families, as *N. N.* did; they must on with the *Surplice* and *Tippet*, and preach to the Text of *Fifthly Beloved is it so? Is our Brother gone astray?* Yea verily to *Perdition*.

Euf. Laughing and Drolery, are great Reliefs at a *non-plus*. I have often seen some in Conversation, when their Stock of Reason was laid out, extream lavish of such Impertinencies. Leave the Pulpit to the *Parson*, but preach within your own Walls; at least by Example: This is more persuasive than Words; 'tis within your Sphere, within the Liberties of your Office and Obligation too; or at least shroud your own Abominations under a Cover; let them not take Air, they'll sit more easie on your Conscience, and not entangle others; if you'll not couple together the Office of Chaplain and Master, don't that of *Gentleman* and *Devil*.

Eleuthe. I perceive by your Discourse, that Gentlemen will not gain your good Will, unless they put on Fetters, and fee their Keepers. Slavery is not so valuable a Blessing, as to be purchas'd. People often buy

Liberty,

Liberty, but seldom Chains. I must stand forsooth upon Reservedness and Ceremony with my *Lacquay* or Groom, put a Restraint upon my Freedom, mure up my Mouth, and stifle Mirth, or else cry out, *Jack, under Favour!* Or, *Pray be not scandaliz'd!* Is not this to put *Jack* in the Coach, and perch my Lord behind it? to place *Tom* in the *Parlour*, and bind over *Right Worshipful* to the Kitchen? In short, Speculation and Theory may approve your Morals, Practice cannot. We hire Mens Service, not their Devotion.

Euseb. Very well, according to your Causistry, Precedents vye the Standard of Right, and then in the same *Figure* and *Mode* it follows plain enough, that because Men damn themselves, they do it justly, and we are eternally miserable by Law. The Consequence is Logical enough, but not too Christian. However, if Hell have such wonderful Charms, run into its Embraces: But remember there is no Return; and look before you jump, else you may condemn your Folly, but not amend it. Quick Resolutions are soon repented.

Eleutherius arose in a Heat, and walked about the Room, his Pulse beat high, and one might read the Trouble of his Mind on his Cheeks.

Eleutherius

Eleuthe. I love not these severe Morals ; they cow the Spirits, disjoyn Converſation, and clog Freedom. Spleen begot 'em, Melancholy nurs'd 'em, and Envy recommended 'em to the Pulpit. For, I find these Men are the great Champions of Virtue, that are not able to be vicious ; and those declaim most against Pleasure that are past enjoying it. Yet these false Devotees will needs impose on Gentlemen, and set their Impotence as a Law for others.

Euseb. Look ye, there is no Harm done you are still Master of your Practice, though neither of us can command Principles ; these come not within the Precinct of your Liberty ; are neither ſubject to Change or Alteration ; *Semper idem*, is their *Motto*. In a Word, Sir, I mould not my Discourse to an Humorist's Inclination, but to the Rule of Truth. Judgment and Conviction move my Tongue, not Adulation. If I have imposed on you, unmask the Impoſture ; if not, let good Humour run in its ordinary Channel. To strike in with a Patient's Disease is not Kindness, but Cruelty ; and I believe you had rather be eased of a Distemper with *Coloquintida*, than be be ſent into the next World with *Julips*.

Eleuthe. It's true, but I would not be deſtitute of Elbow Room, nor willingly fit in the

the Stocks, or be awed by a Groom or a Foot-Boy. I would not bid Defiance to Conscience, nor war upon the Almighty. I am willing to condescend to an Agreement upon Honourable Conditions.

Euseb. What? Will you stand upon Terms with your Maker! and Article with your Creator? *id est*, you'll vouchsafe to be his Servant, provided he takes off all Restraint from Nature, and give you leave to live at Discretion? Fye, fye, *Eleutherius*, you are too weak to grapple with the Omnipotent; when he commands, you must obey.

Eleuthe. Right, when he commands; the Question is not *de jure* but *de facto*, not whether he can command these Trifles you spoke of, but whether he has commanded 'em. For in short, we bawl upon the Topick of Virtue and Vice, and yet we scarce know what we wou'd be at. For what one Country approves, another condemns; and what deserves the Halter under one *Elevation* merits a *Patent* under another. The *Lacedemonians* are rank'd subtil Thefts among the Virtues, and ever punish'd your clumsy Lurchers; as if the Sin consisted in the Discovery alone. In other Places it's an *Act* of Piety to feed heartily on a deceased Relation, and an unpardonable Crime to deliver a Father over to the Mercy of Worms.

Euseb.

Euseb. What do you mean ?

Eleuthe. I mean, that Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Virtue and Vice, lie much in Fancy and Education ; that Policy and Custom coin these different Notions. Why else is the same thing *Good* under one *Meridian*, and *Evil* under another ? Popery in *Italy, France* and *Spain* is voted Orthodox ; in *England* Heterodox. Beyond Seas Fasting and Celibacy are meritorious ; in *England* Celibacy is superstitious, vain and hypocritical. So that in Conclusion, *Good* and *Bad* vary with the Climate, and by consequence take their *Being* from Imagination, Interest, or Civil Authority, unless you'll say that all Mens Reason is not of the same Species.

Euseb. No doubt, you have harangued excellently on the Text of *Libertinism* ; why don't you confound all Religions, as well as all Actions ?

Neand. I believe he does : For if Virtue and Vice differ only in Name, Faith and Infidelity may easily be reconciled, and the *Mahometism* may put in as good Pretension to Revelation as Christianity.

Euseb. Prithee, *Eleutherius*, talk no more of Faith, of Church, of Religion ; thy Breath smells rank enough to fly-blow Truth, and to taint the Gospel.

Eleuthe

Eleuthe. Adieu; my Business calls upon me. Pray let our next Conversation be more palatable.

Euseb. By all means; we'll talk of *Wine*, *Women*, and *Venison Pasties*; these are palatable Topicks for Epicures and Scavengers, but not for Gentlemen and Christians.

Eleuthe. Gentlemen your humble Servant.

Euseb. You see, *Neander*, *Eleutherius*'s universal Practice, drawn up in short; can Blindness, Stupidity, and Madness soar higher? Like crowned Victims these unhappy Creatures dance and sing under the fatal Stroak without Concern, without Sense of the Danger! They laugh and droll one Moment, and begin the next to weep eternally. Oh Frenzy! They post in full Speed in the broad Way to Perdition, and will needs be told they spur to Heaven! What Notions have these Men of the other World, who live so madly in this! Surely they fancy the Soul flashes into nothing, when the Body falls into Dust, and that they die like Beasts, they live so like 'em. Yet these are your well-bred Gentlemen, your Men of Parts and Merit: And indeed one must have extraordinary Breeding to compliment our selves into Hell; one must be witty to Madness, and prudent to Folly, to contrive our eternal Misery so efficaciously. But seeing

they will not profit by our Instructions, let us, *Neander*, by their Stupidity: We'll leave 'em to their selves; their Vices can't damn us; both Glory and Punishment are personal; we have made a Day's Work of it; to-morrow we'll prosecute the same Subject.

DIALOGUE V.

A Prosecution of the same Subject.

“ *E* *Leutherius* at his Return to his Lodgings, grew uneasy and sullen; the late Discourse had alarm'd his Fears, and awaked his Conscience, which began in good Earnest to call him to Account, and flung before him an ungrateful *Journal* of his Vices. The unhappy Gentleman was unacquainted with such Reproaches, he scarce understood the Language, and found in himself no Inclination to learn it. He thought he had treated Conscience so ill, it would not have the Confidence to return; and indeed for several Years he heard no News of it; which made him suspect it was deceased, or had taken a Turn to the Indies for Diversion.

“ So that he knew not what to make of these unusual Grips of these Aches of the Stomach. At first he suspected *Eusebius* had Intelligence with Satan, and cried out for a *Divine and Exorcism*. For why? (said he) can’t Potions conjure up from Hell the Devil of *Fear*, as well as *Phyltrums* raise the Fury of *Love*? But he soon confess’d, the Devil’s Business was to deaden remorse, not to quicken it ; to gag Conscience, not to provoke it into Clamours and Reproaches.

“ Though *Eusebius* had argued down the Gentleman’s Understanding, he made no Impression upon his *Will* ; though this Faculty be really blind, it affects Command, and seldom fails to usurp the Government ental’d on *Reason* ; when ever its seconded by the rebellious *Mobile* of unruly Passions. Hence it comes that our Judgment generally strikes in with our Inclination, and seldom pronounces against our Interest and Pleasure.

“ *Eleutherius* had been train’d up in the wild Principles of Libertinism ; and having tasted the Sweetness of an uncontrouled Liberty, he found in himself no Propension to enslave his *Reason* to the Rules of Revelation, nor his *Practice* to the Laws of Morality ; wherefore he bribed his *Will* to over-reach his *Reason*, and very eagerly

“ helpt in the *Imposture*; his Endeavour
“ proved successful; for in Spight of Con-
“ viction he questioned the Arguments of
“ *Eusebius*, and laid his late Defeat on the
“ Weakness of his own Abilities, not on the
“ Force of his Adversaries Reasons: And
“ now his Conscience began to speak in a low-
“ er Tone; it upbraided him with a fainter
“ Accent and a kind of Respect; nor did he
“ doubt but a second Conference would send
“ it again beyond Sea; but he would not
“ leave the Cause to his own Management,
“ but pitch upon his Friends, a *Barister* and a
“ *Courtier*, whom he supposed to be mighty
“ Wits, because they laught at Piety to Scan-
“ dal. The Design was laid handsomly, and
“ had a promising Aspect; for tho' the Law-
“ yer managed ill his Tongue, the other was
“ excellent at his Weapon, and so might push
“ on the Cause with a steel Point, as well as
“ with a brazen Forehead.

“ *Eleutherius* next Morning desired *Eusebius*
“ to favour him with a Visit in the Evening
“ he promised to meet him at his House, and
“ put off *Neander* till the next Day. He went
“ at the time appointed, but found only *Eu-
“ leutherius*'s Lady at home. She received
“ *Eusebius* with Civility, and desired him to
“ expect her Husband's Return.

“ She

" She was a *Lady* of the Town, an Admirer
" of Ease, and a Mortal Enemy to Constraint.
" One Part of the Morning she lay in her Bed,
" the other she sat at her *Toylet*. She spent the
" Evening either in receiving Visits, or re-
" turning 'em. Her Wit run before her Judg-
" ment, but her Tongue distanc'd both. In
" fine, her Thoughts soared not an Inch above
" Earth. She was wedded to the World, en-
" chanted with the present, and unmindful
" of the future.

" After some usual Civilities, Pray, Sir,
(said she) give me Leave to enquire what
" pafs'd between my Husband and you yester-
" day, he return'd in Disorder; I hope there
" was no Blood drawn.

Euseb. None: My Duelling-Days, Madam,
are past, my Sword has slept some Years in
the Scabbard, and nothing but an extraordi-
nary Occasion shall release it from that Con-
finement.

Lady. Perchance, you bled his Pocket;
Bleeding is sensible to some Constitutions in
that Vein; and I have seen Persons who
would let out seven Ounces of Blood with
fewer Grimaces, than one of Silver. And
indeed *Eleutherius* is of this Humour, his Mo-
ny and Patience go together.

Euseb. We past the Afternoon in Discourse, not in Play, and I suppose he took Pet because we could not agree upon the Point in Question.

Lady. You surprize me, Sir, he and I play at *Cross Questions* every Day ; nay we seldom are of the same Opinion : Yet you would take him for a *Dove* without Gall, without Passion, yes, without Sense, he bears my Humour so tamely : Certainly you discuss'd a Matter of Importance, to talk him into such an extraordinary Distemper. May I be so rude, as to ask you the Subject of your Conversation ?

Euseb. Madam, the Subject was, Whether the Gentry be not obliged to practise Christian Virtues ; and whether this Precept, *Be perfect*, falls not as heavy on *Lords* and *Ladies*, as on *Valets de Chambres* and *Waiting-Women*? *Eleutherius* maintain'd the Non-obligation, and treated me with Heat and Passion, because I would not give up the Gospel to espouse his Error.

Lady. Indeed Sir, I do not enter into Mens Concerns, but I am of Opinion, that Precept reaches not our Sex. Our Constitution is delicate, soft, and unattempting, more fit for Ease than Labour, and more inclinable to Pleasure than Pain. Besides Liberty is our Favourite, and Constraint our mortal Enemy. The very Name of a Precept chills our Blood, and the Obligation of a Command is an invincible Tempta-

Temptation to transgress it. God therefore seeing our Nature unapt for Burden, cannot surely overcharge it with Prohibitions or Commands.

Euseb. But I suppose, Madam, you have some Pretensions for Heaven; you hope to enjoy God in the next World, as well as his Creatures in this.

Lady. I'll endeavour to be happy here, and hope to be so hereafter. Surely, Sir, you don't take me for a *Japoneſe* without Soul, without Expectation of a future State.

Euseb. No, Madam; but of too much Liberty of Principle, and Education too. But pray, how will you find God unless you seek him? And how will you be received into Heaven at your Death, unless you prepare the Way to it by Virtue in your Life? Our Saviour was pleased to assure Mankind, that the Way to Heaven is *narrow* and *uneven*: Perchance your Ladyship has fallen upon a more convenient Road, and intends to ride thither in a *Coach and Six*.

Lady. I seek his Will in the Bible, and his Presence in the Church.

Euseb. But do you also in your Actions? Alas, Madam, the Knowledge of God's Commands will not save you; and I suppose many mourn in Hell, who sometimes visited the Church on a *Sunday*. You know, Ma-

dam, the greatest Part of humane Actions are of themselves indifferent, and take their Value from the Intention: They must be directed to God's Honour, to benefit our Souls; and tend to his Glory, to forward our Salvation. May I be so bold, as to entreat your Ladyship to favour me with a brief Account of the Method you use in the daily Oblation of your Actions?

Lady. Sir, I have not yet resolved on a Confessor; I own no such Obligation; and I am not disposed to Works of Supererogation; and therefore you must not expect to sound my Conscience, or to read my Thoughts.

Enseb. I confess, I am not quite furnish'd for the Employment of *Direction*; and I had rather be condemn'd to the driving of *Lions*, than to the leading of *Beata's*. But however, seeing you are pleas'd to refuse me the Favour I demanded, you will let me try at least if I can hit on your Method.

“ Omnipotent Eternal God! for thy sake
 “ I intend to devote every Action of this
 “ Day to the World, without leaving one
 “ Thought for Heaven. My only Care shall
 “ be to have none, and my only Study to a-
 “ void Sollicitude. I'll glitter in Silks and Sil-
 “ ver, and hang Lordships in my Ears; tho'
 “ my Sons become *Laquais*, my Daughters
 “ *Chamber-maids*, and my Husband fasts out
 “ my

my Bravery in the *King's-Bench* or the *Marshallsea*. I'll want nothing at Table but Appetite, and rather run upon Tick, than keep within the Bounds of Frugality or Decency. After Dinner I'll either give or return Visits, and entertain the Company at the Expence of Modesty and Charity. In the Evening I'll drive to the *Hide-Park*, and from thence strike off to a *Ball* or a *Comedy*. I'll please those Gallants who please me; and smile on those who extol my rare Perfections. All this, O God ! I offer up !

&c.

In good Earnest, Madam, dare you banter the *Most High* at this Monstrous Rate? Would not such an Offering (like that of *Cain*) draw down a Curse instead of a Blessing? What! do we seek God by trampling upon his Commands, and merit Heaven by deserving Hell? Or is not this a faithful *Copy* of your Practice? Is not your Study, your Busines, your on Employment to invent new Pleasures, and then to enjoy 'em! Now, Madam, if you dare not offer up your Actions to God, with what face can you expect a Reward! Will he recompence Vice, and crown Impiety; Or, have I misrepresented your Conduct! Don't you rave after Pleasure, Vanity, and Gallantry!

Lady. What then ?

Euseb. St. Paul is very positive, that a Woman that liveth in Pleasure, is Dead while she liveth : She lives in Appearance, but is dead in Effect ; he was indeed the Life of Sense, but not that of Grace, and by Consequence will never enjoy that of Glory.

Lady. Pray, Sir, can't a Woman wear fine Apparel without forfeiting her Robe of Innocence ? Must she rise from a full Table to suffer eternal Hunger ? Must she be conveyed from the Play-House into a Place of Torments ? Can't we be happy in the next World, unless we lie continually stretcht on Racks and Tortures in this ?

Euseb. Our Blessed Saviour, Madam, shall be heard, if you please, upon this Point. *Woe be to the Rich, to those that feast, to those that laugh.* You have, Madam, a plentiful Estate, you regale your Appetite, you laugh sometimes at your Neighbour's Virtues, and as often at the Expence of his Reputation : Do not therefore our Saviour's Maledictions concern your Ladyship ? And will he receive you in the next World with an *Euge*, who strikes you with a tripple *Væ* in this ?

Lady. You misapply Scripture, to forge an Argument, and play the declaiming Pendant : Is it a Sin to visit the Play-House ? to dance at a Ball ? to have a comfortable Estate ?

state? a well furnish'd Table? and upon Occasion to smile?

Euseb. I answer first, though these Actions taken in Retail are not criminal, yet taken in a Lump they can't be innocent. For is it lawful, do you think, to consecrate all the Moments of your Life to Ease and Pleasure? to caress Passion, and court Sensuality, to make Satisfaction the Principal and End of all your Desires and Endeavours, and not to give Virtue the very Place of an Accessory? What mean those Precepts of *Self-Denial, of suffering, of mortifying the Sallies of the Flesh?* Do they stand for *Cyphers* in the Gospel, or were they made meerly to transgress? Did the Son of God espouse our Nature with all its Infirmities? Did he suffer Hunger, Persecution, Whips, and Death to purchase us Grace, to be drawn from *Hide-Park* to the *Theatre?* from thence to *Balls* and *Feasts?* Did we come into the World to dance *Menuets* and *Ricadones?* to sing *Airs* either amorous or uncharitable?

Secondly, To see a Play that is either innocent or instructive, is no Sin. But then to see five hundred Plays, that from the *Prologue* to the *Epilogue*, are either stuft with Blasphemy, or larded with Atheism, or embroidered with Smut and Ribaldry, is an Sin. Can a Christian with a safe Conscience take Pleasure in hearing the Name of his Redeemer?

deemer reviled, in seeing every part of his crucified Saviour recrucified in horrid Oaths? Does a Spectator of this second Crucifixion bear him more Reverence, than those of his First? Can you see without a Crime, Virtue brought every Evening to the Scaffold either as a Criminal or a *Harlequin* to be punish'd or hooted at? and Vice tread the Stage first with Pomp, and then go off with Reward? Is it not a Sin to countenance one? And who countenances those Scenes of Libertinism but those who pay the Players and applaud the Poet?

I do not say it's a Crime precisely to dance sometimes at a *Ball*, to sing an *Aire al'amode*, to enjoy a fair Estate, to sit at a full Table, or to wear a *gawdy Mantua*, if you clear Accounts with Merchants and Taylors. But, Madam, these Amusements are waited on by so violent, so provoking Temptations, that a Lady smitten (to transport and do tage with these Vanities) will certainly fall into many crying Offences, and by Consequence draw down upon her sinful Head both the Maledictions and Vengeance of our Blessed Saviour.

For alas! if the most Watchful are sometimes surprized, are not those in Danger who sleep in the very Camp of their Enemies? If those Christians can scare overcome

come the Allurements of Vice, who confine themselves to Retirement and Solitude ; who check Appetite ; who baulk Passion, and crucifie the Flesh ; will those withstand the Attacks of Concupiscence; the Assaults of Satan, the fawning Charms of the World, who inflame the Blood with high Feeding ? who imbolden Passion by a criminal Condescendence ? and foolishly brave the Force of the Devil's battering Engines without the Armour of Prayer, Humility and Mortification ?

Lady. Pray, Sir, be pleased to cut out some Work for Ladies ; set 'em a Task, and regulate their Employment. I suppose you'll remove us at least four Miles from *London*, as the Government does on Occasion *Papists* ; or provide us with Wheels and Flax ; or confine us to the *Dairy* to make *Cheese-Cakes* and *Custards* for the Family.

Euseb. No, Madam, Town-Air is proper for your Complexion. I am not for Removal into the *Campagne*, nor for gracing your Ladyship with the Title of *Spinstress* ; (tho' perchance the Law does) I am of no levelling Principles ; Quality has Prerogatives, and I would have you maintain 'em : But then if you are a Lady, you are also a Christian, and must make good the Character, *id est*, you must love those very things you hate, and hate

hate those you dote on ; Ease is your Darling, and Pleasure your Favourite Inclination ; you must withdraw your Affection from the one, and prosecute the other with Aversion ; you pamper your Body to Excess, and carefs it almost to Idolatry ; you must treat it like an Enemy ; you must cut off all superfluous Sollicitude, and stint it to what is meerly necessary ; your Equipage and Furniture must answer your Rank, not your Vanity ; and you must measure 'em also by your Husband's Estate, as well as by his Quality ; you must educate your Children in the Fear of God, and give 'em Breeding suitable to their Extraction.

“ Her Ladyship flew out into a Passion ;
“ and had not *Eleutherius* returned in the
“ Nick of time, *Eusebius* might have found
“ by Experience, that good Counsel is often
“ times ill received : But *Eleutherius*’s Presence
“ conjur’d the Tempest. He begged *Eusebius*’s
“ Pardon for having disappointed him
“ and told him ingeniously, he came from
“ beating the Drum, to invite two Volun-
“ teers to continue the Combat, that they re-
“ fused to enter into Service.

“ Pray, Sir, replied *Eusebius*, let the Con-
“ troversy sleep ; I have delivered my Op-
“ nion, if it jars with yours, I cannot hel-
“ it ; you are your own Master. After som-
“ in

"indifferent Discourse, *Eusebius* returned
"home, and the next Day gave a Visit to
"Neander, and prosecuted his former Dis-
"course thus.

DIALOGUE VI.

Eusebius instructs Neander in the Duties that regard our Neighbour.

Euseb. I toucht briefly at our last Meeting
the Branch of Christian Duty that relates to God. I'll now sum up the most essential Parts of your Obligation towards your Neighbour.

I.

Love your Neighbour, as your self, says the Text; and our blessed Redeemer assures us, that Love, Concord and Union are the most distinguishing Qualities of a Christian. The primitive Believers set such a Value on this darling Virtue of God made Man, that one Heart seem'd to animate all their Bodies, and one Soul to govern all their Actions: so that the very Heathens, who hated their Religion, admired their Charity, and were forc'd to confess, that nothing bat a Divine Hand

Hand could strike that Heavenly Concord from such a Discord of Humours, Inclinations and Interests.

And lest Self-Love might restrain the Word *Proximus*, and as the Jews confine it, to Country-men, Friends and Relations, our Saviour has been pleas'd to extend it to all Mankind ; so that without Distinction, without Limitation, it takes in the whole Species. Whosoever bears the Impress of *God* on his Forehead, though he carry that of the *Beast* on his Heart, is still our Neighbour. No Distance of Place can cut off the Affinity, no Length of Time can wear out the Obligation.

Nor must this Divine Virtue only play on our Tongue, or evaporate into gentile Discourses, or smooth Compliments wrapt up in Terms of Courtship ; no, it must not end in Grimace or Ceremony, but stand the Test of Action ; fine Protestations of Kindness too, too often vail traitorous Designs, and sugar'd Words poisonous Intentions : Nor is it a new Treachery to present the Olive of Peace with one Hand, and the *Stiletto* with the other.

II.

Christian Charity taken in its full Latitude, implies Precepts both *negative* and *positive* ; by those you are most severely forbid

to contrive auy Mischief against your Neighbour ; by these you are commanded to be as useful to him as your Circumstances permit, and his Necessities require.

III.

Hence you must not invade your Neighbours Honour, nor make any Attempt upon his Reputation : A good Name is no contemptible Treasure ; the *Wise Man* prizes it above an Estate ; it sets off Birth, and gives an Air even to Poverty ; it shines brighter than Wealth, and sparkles more than all the Tinsel Gawdry of Fortune ; it supports Grandure, and sweetens Misfortune. A Bankrupt that has lost his Coin, if he has not forfeited his Honour, has a Resource at Command. Though his Fortune be fallen, he has a Fund to rebuild it on : But Man without Honour is dead to all the Offices of Society and Commerce ; now when his moral Capacity lies in the Grave, his Physical one alone creates Misery and Contempt to himself. Sport for some, and Pity for others.

God has so entailed this Blessing to every individual, that it's not at our Disposal ; we can neither make over this Property by Deed of Gift, Bill of Sale, or mortgage it at pleasure. Much less can any other Man lay any

any Claim to it. You may commence a Sute of Law agaihst me, if you think I am your Debtor ; but you can't put in a Bill against my Honour. If I have wrong'd you, sue for Satisfaction ; strain my Goods, but assail not my good Name.

Yet, Good God ! with what a Freedom, with what Boldness do we attack our Neighbour's Reputation ? One would think Fame like *bona a despota*, Goods without Owner belonged to the first Invader.

Detraction is universally the Discourse *ala mode*, not only among the Frie, but also among the Nobility. Our Conversations are begun and carried on at our Neighbour's Ex- pence, and so we laugh and riot at free Cost we darg out his most secret Failings to the Bar, nay, and hale 'em to Execution with out Authority, without Warrant, yes, with a greater Crime.

Suppose his Crimes are real ; what then Who made us Judges ? who commissioned us to hang the Delinquent *in Effigie* ? to proclaim on the House Tops what he committed in his Closet ? Though he has lost his Honour in the Sight of God, he stands fair in the Esteem of Men, and has Right to continue so, till his Crimes betray themselves and expose his Iniquity to the Publick ; if he has done ill, God will call him to a sever

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because
Person

Account, but we must not intermeddle. It's our Duty to pity a Sinner, and to pray for him, but not to upbraid him.

I only jested, (says one.) But why must I pay for your Diversion? Though you publish my Faults in Jest, you stab my Reputation in Earnest. But besides, by this very Excuse you acknowledge your self a Fool, to prove your Innocence: For to *jest* and to *play the Fool* are in Practice Synonymous.

He is my Enemy, (says another.) Did you inform the Company of this Circumstance, you might perchance detract more, and sin less; for who believes an Enemy? On such an Occasion all goes for Satyr and invective. When the Heart is out of Tune, the Tongue never goes right; but you whet and oyl your Darts, that they may pierce deeper. You command me to conceal your Passion, and then Detect my Life to shew me for a Monster; and thus you call in Artifice to second Malice, and misuse your Wit, to ruine an Innocent, and to enhance your Guilt.

But why am I your Enemy? Because I would not resolve to be your *Dupe*. You set Traps to ensnare me; I discovered the Ambuscade, and had Wit to avoid it: And thus you take the Liberty to bespatter my Fame, because you wanted Power to affront my Person.

Yet,

Yet, though I am your Enemy, you are not, I suppose, an Infidel. If I have failed in my Duty, must you betray yours for Company? You are a Christian, and must therefore either forget or forgive. My Impiety cannot warrant yours. Revenge is *causa major*, and only belongs to the Court of the most High. At his Bar alone we must plead our Cause, and from his upright Judgment we must expect Redress.

Ah, Dear *Neander*! let us turn our Eyes homeward, and examine our own Conduct; we may perchance find there Matter for Satyr, and Work for Repentance. Here we may blame without Detraction, and condemn without Sin. But it's both mean and unchristian, (like Flies) hover about our Neighbour's Sores. Put a Centinel over your Tongue; it's a slippery Member; Nature has framed it for Motion, and Malice has fitted it for any Mischief; a Child can set it a running, but all the Force of Reason, all the Checks of Conscience are not able to stop it in its Carrer.

But above all things be cautious and tender of Ladies Reputations: A Woman's Honour, like her Sex, is soft complexion'd; the very Breath sullies its Lustre, and a Touch dashes it in Pieces. Wounds made by the Tongue, (like the biting of Crocodiles) are above

above the healing Virtue of Balsam, and the Skill of Surgery. *Quod dentibus laceravit, nunquam sanatur.* An indiscreet Word bolted out at random, without Design, without Malice, oftentimes stabs the Fame of the female Sex, and every Wound is mortal.

My Blood has often curdled in my Veins, when I hear'd Gentlemen magnify their infamous Conquests, and raise cruel Trophies on the Ruins of Women's Honour ; I had not Patience to hear their Bravades, nor Power to hinder 'em. What will these People blush at, (thought I) who proclaim their Infamy, and promulge their Shame ? Certainly they must think it a fine thing to be a Monster, why else do they triumph in Lewdness, and sport with Debauchery ?

These mighty Victories are either real or Pretended ; if real, can Fancy frame any thing more disingenuous, more diabolical, than first to wheedle a Lady out of her Innocence, and than to prostitute her Honour to the wanton Caprice of a Club of Reprobates, who will not fail to discover her Shame at the next Rendezvous, and to multiply their own Crimes by lampooning hers. Here is a Brace of Sins, both smell strong of Malice, both forbode Damnation.

If

If pretended only, the Crime is yet of a deeper Die ; it's of a more formidable Aspect, of a more gygantick Size : Here is Innocence at the Block, and Guilt commits the Murder.

I know in the next World God will call to a most severe Account these Christian *Canibals* that welter in Blood, and (like famish'd Wolves) worry their own Species. But I would have the Wisdom of the Nation make some Provision against such brutal, such inhumane Attempts. Why shall a High-way-man hang for taking my Purse, and a Rake go unpunish'd, who invades my Honour ? Why shall a Rape upon a Woman's Body be revenged with a Haulter, and Violence upon her Fame be rewarded with Applause ? If the Faults be greater, why are not the Punishments at least equal ? Why is there not a Restraint on the Tongue as well as on the Hands ? Is it because it's less Capable of Discipline ? What, must the Greatness of the Mischief be a Plea for Impunity ? Because this *puny petulant* Member commits more dismal Crimes than our whole Body, must it enjoy a more uncontroll'd Liberty ? I would have these Beasts of Prey forc'd out of Savageness and Cruelty by Law and Discipline ; they should be clapt in the Obligatory Pound, or cooled with a hot Iron : or at on.

leaf

least we should keep in Pay a Brigade of Hunters to ferret out Deffamators, and to clear the Nation of this noxious Vermine, as once we did of Wolves: But I fear the Distemper is past Cure; those who are infected carry the Contagion to the Grave. Not one in a thousand repents.

Neand. Why so? Is Detraction one of those Sins that are neither pardoned in this Life nor the other? True Sorrow is a Catholicon, an universal Salve for all the Wounds of Conscience.

Euseb. Right, true Repentance has a kind of Omnipotence; it disarms divine Justice, and turns God into Mercy; but then it must be *true, real, sincere*. Now, do ye think, these Men of Honour (as they are pleas'd to style themselves) will ever resolve to repair ruin'd Reputation at the Expences of their own? Will they set a disjointed Fame at their own Charge? No, no!

Neand. Can't I reinstate a Man in the just Possession of his Honour, without forfeiting my own? Express your Mind clearer, I conceive not what you would be at.

Euseb. Detraction is a Sin against Justice, and therefore by the Laws of God and Nature the Offender lies under an indispensable Obligation of indemnifying the injur'd Person. *Non remittitur peccatum, donec restituatur*

tur ablatum. Now the Detractor ruffles his Neighbour's Honour, he blasts his Reputation, he must therefore make good the Loss; and as the Tongue is guilty of the Theft, so it must make Satisfaction. For the Wounds of Honour are only heal'd by the Instrument that made 'em. The Criminal must acknowledge his Fault, he must confess that Passion run away with his Reason; that Malice carried him beyond his Duty, and Truth also; that what he laid to his Neighbour's Charge, was hatch'd in his own Brain, or taken upon Credit; and if a bare Assileveration will not do the Work, he must back his Confession with an Oath.

Neand. This is severe: What must a Gentleman give himself the Lye? Flesh and Blood cannot practice such rigorous Morals; the Remedy is worse than the Disease; and if your Casuistry be Orthodox, it's easier for a Camel to pass through the Eye of a Needle, than for a Detractor to enter into Heaven.

Euseb. Under Favour, *Neander*, the least Sin is a greater Evil, than the greatest Infamy; and I hold it much more easie to blush for an Aspersion, than to burn for it eternally.

Neand. Don't Men charge up to the Cannon's Mouth, to gain Honour, and leave

their

their Bodies in the Breach to be carried off with Applause? Nay, do they not often-times march up to the Out-works of Hell, to maintain their purchased Reputation? Can you therefore think that those Bravoes, who tremble more at the Shadow of a Disgrace, than at all the Terrors of Damnation, will buy Pardon at the Expence of their Honour?

Euseb. The Question (Dear *Neander*) is not what Men do, nor what Men will do, but what they should do. Were Practice the Standard of Duty, we might reform the Gospel, as well as the Calendar; we might turn those Woes God has pronounced against Injustice, Drunkenness, and Whoredom, upon Justice, Sobriety and Charity: For it's certain these Virtues are invisible in Practice, and those Vices are too too fashionable. But, *Neander*, though Custom and Practice may enhance Guilt, they cannot lessen it.

Men are fond of Honour to Madness and frenzy. It's a *noli me tangere*; the least Attempt upon this darling Folly is often revenged with Murder. But then, methinks, the Inclination we have to conserve our own Fame, should inspire some Tenderness for that of our Neighbour. For have we not Reason to suppose, he is no less acquainted

with the Value of this inestimable Treasure, than our selves, and that he would be as unwilling to expose it to the Mercy of petulant Tongues? Perchance, *Neander*, I rate it to the Height of its Worth, yet I give God's Favour the Preference: One Grain of his Divine Grace out-weighs a Tun of a Hector's Reputation. In a Word, I would live an Age under the Stroaks of the most picquant Disgrace, I would sheath in my Breast all the Darts of Malice, Envy and Poverty, either to die innocent, or repentant; for all these Miseries are fleeting and transitory; but the Reward of Virtue, and the Punishment of Vice are both eternal. If therefore your Men of Honour will rather stand by their Crimes, than recant, I would have 'em train'd up in the Discipline of Bedlam: **A Switch** is the best Remedy against Madness.

Besides, why is an humble Confession a degrading Satisfaction? The Name of a Christian is glorious; how then can the Duty lie under Reproach? If the Profession be honourable, the Practice of it cannot be shameful. Why then do we tremble at Shadows, and run from Monsters that take their Deformity from Imagination?

I did not blush to wound my Neighbour's good Name; why should I be ashamed to

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heal it? Sin should be waited on by Infamy, as it is by Remorse; and Repentance should be accompanied by Glory; but by a Strange *legerdemain* the Devil has turn'd the Tables, and attack'd Shame to this, and Impudence to that: But however, Repentance is an honest Act; it's worthy of a Man, and the indispensable Duty of a Christian; why then should it fear a Witness? The Difference between good and ill Men lies not in the Esteem of Virtue, but in the Practice; for both equally value it. But the first only possess it, because the others will not go to the Charge of procuring it.

Neand. Pray is not Fear a clownish Vice? a female Weakness? Does it not sit ungentlely on Quality? Now what can bring a Gentleman to the Bar, and clap him on his Knees, with a *Pray forgive me* in his Mouth, but this mean Passion?

Euseb. You are mistaken; Cowardice and Fear are neither Synonymous in Philosophy, nor Morals: That is always a Vice, this is often a Virtue. When Prudence commands Fear, Boldness is Temerity and Folly: It's Cowardice to despond and sink under a Danger, that Valour can subdue; but it's Rashness to engage with one above the Strength of humane Force. Has then a Gentleman less Courage, because he trembles at the im-
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Partial Justice of an enraged Deity ? because he dares not wrestle with the Omnipotent, or stand the Shock of his Fury ? because he'll rather repent than die in Obstinacy ? and rather return to his Duty, than suffer eternally for transgressing it ? *Neander*, let not the wild Notions of our pretended Gentlemen be your Guides ; their Principles are as corrupt as their Practice, and their Reason is as bad as their Conscience.

Neand. Are you not a Member of the Port-Royal Club ?

Euseb. Why do you ask this Question ?

Neand. I am told they are mighty Patrons *de la morale severe* ; they preach up Rigour to such an exorbitant Height, that one would think God's great Prerogative Mercy was either wore out, or extinct. Your Morals have a Flavour of Rigorism ; they are *sower, morose, ill-natur'd*, and call for a Dram of Charity. For look ye, Sir, Detraction (as the World goes) is no Phantom, it's a very real thing, and keeps good Company : This alone pours Life into Conversation ; it quickens Discourse ; without it Mirth would languish, and good Humour sleep. I have seen your *Seventh-form* Wits, as mute, (as if their Mouths were padlock'd) when any serious and innocent Subject came in their Way ; but when their Neighbours

Conduct

Conduct was brought before 'em, their Tongues run before their Conscience; they would take his Life in Pieces, they would rip up his Breast, dissect his Thoughts, and then draw Demonstrations from meer Conjectures; they would hand his Reputation about the Table, till it fell to the Ground, and blow over it, till it smell as rank as the Breath that caused the Stench, and disgorged the Infection. Notwithstanding these People hoped to be saved, without stooping to the Satisfaction you speak of. In short, every Man endeavours by Detraction and Outrage to undermine his Brother's Fame, and no Man so much as thinks of repairing it. Nay, I never heard the Clergy recommend it to dying Persons as a Duty; but either as an Act of Decency, or of Edification. Can I suppose, you are better informed of a strict Obligation than the *Ministry*? or better vers'd in Casuistry than Divines? *Eusebius*, let us damn no Body.

Euseb. I remember when stigmatized Villains with Narratives and Discoveries libeled honest Patriots into *Newgate*, and cut off their Honours and Lives with Fears and Jealousies ; when they sowed the Innocent in Bear-Skins, and then set all the Beagles of the Faction about their Ears ; when they profaned *Old Baily* with Perjuries, any

butchered their Fellow-Subject's Fame at the Bar, to quarter their Bodies at Tyburn. These Knights of the Post flung not up, I suppose, their Pretensions to Heaven: Tho' I have not seen any Recantation. Yet I am sure, unless God nulls all the Laws of Nature, and calls in the Gospel, or issues out under his great Seal an *Amnesty*, they'll fall short of their Expectation.

I confess, this Disease of the Tongue is Epidemical; the Use of Speech has so swerved from its Original Institution, that it's become an Incumbrance and a Snare to Mankind. I look upon the Faculty rather as a Penalty than a Prerogative; and were we devested of it, though you should be unfit for Conversation, we might hope to be more innocent. Now, whether our Calumniators hope to be saved, is a Question. I am apt to believe their Religion and Conscience are of a Peice, and that they confine their Fears, Hope, and Desires within the Compass of this World: For certainiy, the Dread of eternal Fire might cool their Passions, and check their Malice. Were they persuaded of another World, would they not fall with more Scruple, and rise with more Vigour? But if they hope for Salvation without Satisfaction, they build on a deceitful Bottom.

Neander,

Neander, once more let me advise you to be tender of your Neighbour's Honour. Give Ear to the Voice of Nature, that commands you *to do as you would be done by*: You can't chuse but hear this just, this equitable Admonition, unless we stop our Ears, and cast Reason into a mortal Lethargy; nay we must approve the Counsel, so that we can neither plead Ignorance nor Impotence. And certainly a sick Man deserves rather Laughter than Pity, that will rather struggle with a Disease, and groan under the Pangs of a burning Fever, than apply a Remedy.

Yet after all, I grant a disjointed Reputation is not easily fet; and therefore I beseech you, to avoid a Mischief, that draws after it such a dismal Consequence. If other Men have a Mind to be eternally miserable, let 'em have that Satisfaction; but be not so ill advised, as to wait on 'em. Should a Man put Fire to his House, or leap into a boyling Caldron, the Frolick would scarce go round. Yet certainly, those that break in upon another Man's good Name, and never resolve to repair the Injury, hazard a thing more precious than a House or Life. Why therefore shall we refuse to comply in one Case, and not in the other?

I have made a short Survey of Detraction, and laid before you a faint Prospect of its

dangerous Consequences: But it avails not the Patient to know the Nature of his Distemper, unless he be told the Remedy. I will therefore prescribe a *Recipe*. Certainly the Physicians Method is applicable to Diseases of the Soul, no less than to those of the Body. We must strike at the Cause, before we can hope to master the Effect. Now if we trace Detraction up to its Origin, we shall find it spring from Pride and Envy: For it's a kind of Aposteme that lies at the Heart, and breaks out at the Mouth.

Though all Sins have a Flavor of Pride, yet Detraction has a greater Dose of this bad Humour than ordinary. It's the chief Ingredient of this outragious Crime; it discomfes the Stomach, and then immediately gives the *Heart-burning*; and then the Tongue, which is its Index, falls into Disorders. A Man smitten like young *Narcissus* with his own Excellencies, looks down from the Pinacle of his soaring Conceit on other Mortals as Vassals; he fancies Praise is an Inheritance entailed on his Merit; that either to respect or honour another, is to invade his Property, and to set against him an usurping Competitor. Hence he runs in Quest of a Foil, to make his own Perfections appear more gawdy, and sparkle with more Eclat. Now what can give a more charming

charming Turn to his supposed Talent, than his Rival's Folly? Hence he rallies up in a Body all the Auxiliary Forces of Anger and Revenge; he takes the Field, and maraudes upon his Fame; he dissects the poor Creature's Actions, and exposes the whole Anatomy of his private Transgressions to the View and Censure of the Publick. For he wisely fancies, that the Fabrick of his Vanity will stand unmoveable on the Ruins of a Rival's Reputation. Did the Breasts of the proud and haughty-minded Men lie open to Sight; could we rifle all the abstruse and dark Recesses of their Hearts, what Sallies of Joy should we discover at the most innocent Oversight of a Competitor? And then, whoever crows within at the Misfortune, will proclaim it at the first Occasion: For Joy, like Grief, is a stifling Humour, unless it throws off the Oppression.

If therefore you desire to speak ill of no Body, think not too well of your self; set not too exorbitant a Price upon your Merits; remember you are no Phœnix, the only individual of your Species; those Qualities you possess are meer Gratuities, the Effects of God's Liberality, not of your Deserts; you had no Right to be, much less to be great beautiful, or rich. Is it not a Madness therefore for you who can lay Claim to nothing-

to engross all the Gifts of Nature and Fortune? Think not, God has exhausted his Treasury on you alone; he scatters his Favours where he pleases; and if he provides more plentifully for your Neighbour, than for you, why do you complain? Must you be evil because God is good? Must you cast a malicious Glance on another, because he has received some Marks of his great Maker's Kindness? Discompose not your Thoughts for other Peoples Advantages, but enjoy your own with Thankfulness. Fix just Bounds to your Desires, as well as to your Undertakings, otherways you'll rear up imaginary Castles of Greatness, to create to your self a real Torment.

But if you will contend for an honourable Post, manage the Contest fairly; push on your Pretensions with Virtue and Generosity. Let Merit bear away the Prize, not outrage, and if your Rival carry off the Advantage; rather applaud the Conquest, than revile him. By lessening his Parts or Conduct you burlesque your own; but then if you complain, and curse in a Corner, you only betray your Impotence, ill Nature, and Impiety: In fine, look at your Failings and his through the same Glas, and you'll see an humbling Spectacle; you'll behold so many Objects worthy of Blame, that you'll have no great Stomach to censure others. En-

Envy is the second Source of Detraction. This is an ill-natur'd Vice, it loves ill for ill's sake, and takes Pleasure in Torment; it's a kind of *Turn-key* by Birth, and an Executioner by Profession; it feeds on Stench, and sucks *Rats-bane* from Balms, and Infection from Perfumes; it never does a good Turn, but when it designs an ill one; and seldom takes things by the right Handle; Mischief makes up its Employment, Plagues and Famines its Diversion; its Smiles are like blazing Comets, which either hatch Treason, or portend it. What Wonder, if a Man possess'd by this Fiend Plays the Devil, who is Surnamed *Accusator Fratrum*?

But though any Mischief lies within the Reach of an envious Man's Wish, many are removed out of the Verge of his Power: Some move too high to be shot at, others too low; but neither Place nor Station is a sufficient Fence against the Tongue. A Dwarf may engage with a Gyant at this Weapon, or a Clown with a Lord. And for this Reason' when the envious Man can't come at his Antagonist's Person, he sets upon his good Name, and falls foul upon his Honour; and when by the Help of keen Satyr and false Glasses, he has beat down the Outworks, that fenc'd his Fortune from Insult and Ruin, he draws his Cannon nearer, and raises Batteries;

teries against his Grandure and Estate that support it: For he knows that the best built Fortune can't be stable, when Reputation (that propt it) is removed. Thus we see *Socrates* kept his Ground, and even triumphed over the Calumnies of his Accusers, whilst his Reputation interposed. But when a buffooning Comedian droll'd him into Contempt, he appear'd no less guilty before the Judges, than despicable on the Stage. So that in Conclusion Envy found him guilty, and the Senate pronounced the Sentence.

Methinks it's superfluous to dissuade a Man from this Vice. Interest is more powerful than Reason. We dote on Pleasure, and run from Pain by the Instinct of Nature. Who will not rather chuse a Prison with Satisfaction, than a Palace with Torment? But an envious Man, instead of following the Current of Nature, bears up against it. He labours for Labour's sake, and drudges for the meer Expectation of Misery. He leads the Life of *Cain*, haunted with the Spectres of his own Crimes from within, and with a thousand Jealousies from abroad; other Peoples Happiness creates his Torments; their Prosperity gnaws his Entrails, and his Impotence, to over-cast the Sunshine of their good Fortune, claps him on the Wheel. Now a Man that can fall in Love with Pain, and

and court Disquiet, must not be cast in the same Mould, that other Mortals are: And therefore I should think it as easie to dissuade People from Envy, as from vaulting down a Precipice.

But besides, a Man that envies others, is always paid in the same Coin; his Honour will be as roughly handled; when one contests with Multitudes, he stands on the lower Ground, and fights at a Disadvantage. This is the envious Man's Case. For he can't but know the disingenuous Descants on others Actions will reach the Ears of the Offended Persons. Defaming Reports have a miraculous Sympathy with those that Distance of Place is not able to dead the Echo; they rebound from Tongue to Tongue, are tossed from Hand to Hand, till they come to the Knowledge of the Injur'd; and generally (like Snow-Balls) they encrease in the Journey. What a grating Noise then will they make in the Ears of the defamed Person? Will not he think of Reprisals? Will he not treat your Honour with as little Regard as you have his? and God send such an easie Satisfaction may allwage his Resentment. When Men sit Judges in their own Cause, they make the Bills of Losses and Damage rise high; who knows but they may demand

mand Blood, and sacrifice your Life to the *Manes* of their murder'd Reputation ?

In fine, *Neander*, remember you must die. When Death hath sealed your Eyes, you'll find all the Darts of the Tongue shot at your Neighbour, stick in your own Soul ; you'll feel the Smart, but will find no Lenitive, no Cure : Why then shall we run headlong into those Crimes we must either deplore here, or burn for hereafter ? Let us look before us, and not like Beasts follow the meer Impressions of Passion. Let us show we are Men, not by our Vices, but by our Virtues. To have Reason, and act against it, is to debase our Species.

IV.

As God has fenced our Neighbour's Fame, so he has been careful to guard his Possessions against all the Attempts of Avarice and Injustice. *Non furaberis*, says he in the Decalogue, *Thou shalt not steal* ; and then he threatens the Criminal with the Sentence of his high Displeasure, unless he cancels the Transgression with a sincere Repentance. I apprehend, *Neander*, some Gentlemen mistake this Command : They fancy it reaches only Pads, Cut-purses, or Highway-men : But this is a Mistake ; it takes in all who act against the Laws of Justice ; and for

for this Reason I fear, that many who hang at Tyburn, are often less Criminal, than some of those who stand Spectators of the Tragedy, or perchance who sate on the Bench. For in all Kingdoms, Laws are (as Solon said) like Cobwebs, that hamper small flies, whilst the greater break thorough 'em. Poor People bear the Punishment of Injustice, and great ones carry off in Triumph both Pleasure and Profit. These are too big for Execution, though not for Guilt. They can sue for an indigent Neighbour's Field, because it lies conveniently, and persuade the Judges they have more Right, because they have more Mony and Credit. The Lustre of Gold often dazles Lawyers out of Conscience, and just Possessors out of Lordships. Right ebbs and flows by the secret Influence of *Guinea's*. For let me tell you, *Neander*, the Justice of a Cause sprouts up, and thrives miraculously under a Fee.

But though these Men carry the Suit in the Eyes of the World, they lose it at God's high Court of Justice, and their Souls also; nor is there any Difference between these Over-reachers and Cut-purses; but that they are ten times more Criminal. Among the *Lacedemonians* a clearer Theft pass'd for a Virtue. Are not some Christians of the same Persuasion? But for all that, though a

Spartan

Spartan Jury might Possibly find 'em *not guilty*, they'll find no such Indulgence in the Vale of *Jebosaphat*.

I never yet understood, how Sollicitations, and Recommendatious of Causes to the Judges, how double and triple Fees could be well reconciled with this Law, *Thou shalt not steal*: For either you doubt of the Integrity of the Bench, or you do not. If the first, you cast a Scandal on the Face of the Government; you arraign either the Capacity or the Integrity of the Prince; *i. e.* you suspect he wants Judgment in the Choice of Magistrates, or has advanced on Purpose those who would betray the Propriety of the Subject. Now such an *Innuendo* is disrespectful, rash, and highly unchristian.

But besides, if really you doubt of the Judge's Integrity, your Conduct is foolish. For if a Judge will sell a favourable Sentence to the Plaintiff, he'll be no less kind to the Defendant, if he out-bids him. A Man then should be first sure of Success, before he parts with his Mony, otherwise he will be gulled out of his Pretensions, and pay for his Disappointment.

Again this Practice runs quite counter to all the Dictates of Conscience and Justice. For if Gain and Interest be a Magistrate's weak side, if I know he measures Right by

the

the Weight of Silver, and barters Law for Money, can I pamper his Inclination ? or feed his corrupt Appetite ? or strike in with his sinful Distemper ? No more, certainly, than I can with a safe Conscience push him down a Precipice ; for if it be a Sin to permit one, when I can hinder it, is it not a Sin to persuade a Crime ? nay, to buy one ?

If the second ; *i. e.* If you suppose your Business lies in the Hands of upright Men, that square their Verdicts by the Laws, not by Partiality and Favour, why are you eternally upon the Hoof ? why do you tire them and your self too with tedious Applications ? Why do you drain your Pockets to enrich *Pettifoggers* and *Attornies* ? This Trouble is superfluous, and the Expence unneedful. In a Word, Sir, the Conduct is either unprofitable or unjust.

But if you doubt in your Cause, let it fall, at least push it on no farther, with your Credit or Purse ; for all you can expect, is to gain a Sute, and lose your Soul.

Neander. If I can juggle a Neighbour out of his Estate by Quirks of Law, and by a gentle Turn of the Hand buble him out of a considerable Sum, may I not put him to graze upon the Common, without any Obligation to restore ?

Euseb.

Euseb. The very Question is a Scandal not only to Christianity, but to humane Nature ; you are obliged not only to return the Capital, but to Indemnifie him for all the Losses consequent thereto.

Neand. Nay, Sir, I am of your Opinion ; for why should a Man gain by his Crimes ? Yet once I fell into the Company of a Man of parts, of Character and Repute in his Country, who thought otherwise of the Matter : We discours'd the Point, yet I could never get him over to my Opinion : He held so fast to Non-restitution, that there was no moving him. A hearty Repentance, (said he) without Restitution, makes a sufficient Attonement for the Offence. He told me I was unskill'd in Casuistry. I confess'd I had read no Casuist but the Bible and Nature.

Euseb. With Submission to the Gentleman's Character, Parts and Station ; he was either a great Fool, or a superlative Knave, fit for Bedlam, or Newgate. Was he not a Lawyer ?

Neand. He had studied in the Inns of Court.

Euseb. I thought so. It's a healing Doctrine for a wounded Conscience, a palatable and easie Remedy, a *Catholicon* for all the Aches of the Mind, and the Gripes of an over-charged Stomach ; and perchance the

Use is universal, otherways once at least in a Twelvemonth we might see a *Dives* transformed into a *Lazarus*, a *Lord* into a *Laquay*, and a *Lady* into a *Chamber-maid*; we might see those who sit Majestically in Coaches with a long Wig, and a Snuff-Box *a la mode* sit behind 'em. Good God! how many gawdy Birds would make as naked a Figure as the Daw in the Fable, if their Peacock Plumes were returned to their Owners. *Neander*, pray tell that Gentleman I am neither satisfied with his Conscience nor his Skill; he that will not restore stolen Goods, is more criminal, than him that conceals 'em; and he that will keep an ill-purchased Estate in Spight of Justice, will seize on the next that lies in his way; and then how can he understand *Cook* and *Littleton*, who can't read the very Alphabet of Nature? A hearty Repentance without Restitution is a Dream.

Dear *Neander*, never raise the Pile of a great Fortune on a Bottom of Fraud and Injustice; it's an unstable Foundation, and unable to bear the monstrous Weight of Crimes, they crush in a Moment the best built Structure, and entomb the Criminal, together with all his Grandure, under the Ruins of his towering *Babel*. The Triumphs of unjust Men are always short lived. God takes Pleasure in strangling 'em in the very Cradle

idle ; they pass like Lightening and leave nothing behind but Smoak and Vapor : their Fall is no less amazing than their Rise ; they pass off like Phantoms, or else live in Penury and Contempt, or die like Reprobates ; they carry the most legible Marks of God's Malediction stampt on their Foreheads, and tear almost all Men without being pitied by any ; so that Divine Vengeance begins their Torments in this World to continue 'em eternally in the other.

I'll not follow this crying Vice through its Branches, nor make an entire Dissection of all its Parts ; it runs through all the Veins of Commerce, and almost Conversation ; it's found in Play, as well as in Contracts, and is no more innocent under one Shape, than under an other ; you may call it Overreaching, or Outwitting, if you Please, but the Change of Names makes no Alteration of the Thing : Natures depend not on Fancy or Caprice, they are the same in Spight of Custom and Disguise.

V.

I must now caution you against Lewdness. It's a noisom Employment to grope in Puddles, and to dig in Muck. And therefore I'll only skim the Surface, and let the offend-

ive Dreggs lie at the Bottom. You know God has enacted this Law in the Decalogue, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*: This Precept does not onely restrain Acts of Lewdness, but even Thoughts and Desires: For Impurity in Idea draws after it a real Hell; the Smoak that vanishes in a Moment, kindles an eternal Fire.

Neand. I suppose neither Gentlemen of the Court, nor Officers of the Army, come within the Compass of this Prohibition. God surely and Nature have issued out in their Favour a Patent of Exemption.

Euseb. Truly, *Neander*, I never read that either God or Nature had such a Deference for the Court and Army, or so great a Respect for Quality. Why, Man, let our Courtiers be as great as *Alexander*, and our Soldiers as valiant; there sits a more August, and a more powerful Master above, whose Commands they must obey, or smart for the Transgression. The Sword has no Privilege above the Plow, nor has Quality any Right above Peasantry, but to greater Terrors: *Potentes potenter tormenta patientur.*

Neand. If it be so, our Gentlemen and Soldiers are all struck with a Lunacy. They seem to have entred into an Association against Divine Authority, and endeavour by Practice to repeal the Statute; as if God's Laws

Laws could cease *per desuetudinem*, as well as this human. When St. Paul bids every Man take *uxorem*, if he meant a *Miss*, the Counsel is followed even to a Scruple; but if he did not, our Conduct is scandalous to Impudence, and God's Authority is slighted beyond Contempt and Insolence.

Euseb. The Evil lies deep, and the Disease reaches to the *Lands End*; few are clear of the Infection; Lewdness is no more a Diversification; no, it's become the grand Business, the Employment of Mankind; nay, it's improved to Science also; Love Intrigues turn on Method, and are carried on by Demonstration: So that Attempts upon Chastity must come off generally with Success. For Women in our Age are as Ill furnish'd for Resistance, as an old *Spanish Town* for a Siege. But then the *Dons*, when forc'd to surrender, article for their Honour: This they'll bring off, though the Town stay behind in the Hands of the Conquerors. But our female Defendants stand not upon such Niceties; they deliver up their Modesty, and go off with Ignominy: Confusion I will not say; for the Blushes are out of Fashion, unless when it's a Question to practice the Christian Virtues of Sobriety, Temperance, and Chastity.

I have more than once taken a Survey of our Gentry, and I find nine of ten ruin'd by this

as this unlucky Vice ; to all Intents and Pur-
poses, they have forfeited their Honour,
is mortgaged their Estates, impaired their
Healths, their Bodies fall under the Weight
of Lewdness, their Purses are scarce able to
support it. So that if these Young Sparks
would take the Pains to cast up their Ac-
counts, they would find their Pleasures have
brought 'em in no other Profit but Poverty,
Diseases, and more than one Cause of Repen-
tance. Good God ! why must Appetite have
such a strange Ascendant over Reason ? why
must Man thus transgress the End of Creation ?
Appetite was made to obey, Reason to com-
mand. To change their Offices is to throw
down the Enclosure between Man and Beast.
Is it not a Madness to sell this Prerogative
for a petty Satisfaction ? that like the Book
of the *Apocalyps* leave a sweet Flavour in the
Mouth, and Bitterness in the Heart ? But
I suppose Man will enjoy Pleasure, is nothing
delatable but Dirt and Mire ? must he turn
Goat or Baboon before he can be pleased ?
Certainly, he is enamour'd of their Nature ;
dotes so much on their Pastimes ; and I
am apt to believe he would range on their
Hills, or sport on their Trees among a Herd
of Females.

But take all together, I fear the Pleasure
does not come up to Expectation. The Gall
out-

out-weighs the Hony. For let us suppose, a Man possess'd by the unclean Devil of brutish Love, he lodges all the Torments of the Damned in his Heart, and, what is worse, their Guilt ; he shivers and burns, he hopes and despairs, he dreams in Company, and talks in Solitude ; all the Features of his beloved Object meet in his Imagination to wound his Heart, and turn the Idol he adores into a Devil to lash him ; his Fears keep Pace with his Fondness, and Jealousie treads on the Heels of both, and all conspire to make him wretched. For though Love looks pleasing and pretty in Romance, in Life it's Monster, Tyrant and Fury.

A Lover knows, that a Woman, who has withdrawn her Fidelity from God, will forsake a Gallant at the least Prospect of Advantage. Hence Disquiet seizes on the Brain, and Jealousie rises from Hell, to clap him on the Torture ; like the Devil in the Gospel, it sometimes flings him into the Water, sometimes into the Fire ; he watches his Treasure with the Eyes of an *Argus*, and lays a hundred Ambuscades to find his Misery, and her Infidelity ; so that, though *Miss* be faithful, Monsieur is sure to be miserable.

I say nothing here of Aversion, Hatred, Envy, and a thousand other Vipers, that worry his Heart and prey upon his Vitals

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In short, in a besotted Lover alone are centred all the Frenzies and Follies of Bedlam, but that of Mirth. So that Envy can scarce wish him more unhappy, nor Malice render him more unfortunate: But if the Intrigue be carried with a Person of an unspotted Reputation, and who stands fair in the Opinion of the World, nay, and who perchance sets up for a *Lucretia* and *Vestal*, What Endeavours are made to court *incognito*? and to play out of Sight? But if after all, the Sia quickens in her Womb, and that within nine Months she be in Danger to fall into Fits of the Mother; what Pangs, what Throws, what Convulsions tear this poor Creature's Breast? and her Gallant's too? In how lively Shapes does Imagination paint her Folly! She suffers all the Torments of Child-birth at the very Instant of Conception; besides those of Rage, of Despair, and Confusion; and in the End perchance resolves to conceal one Sin by the Help of another; *i. e.* Lewdness by Murder; and thus a poor Innocent, who came into the World by a less Sin, is sent out of it by a greater; and then in all Probability the Tragedy that begun at Midnight in Darkness and Privacy, often ends at Mid-day on a Scaffold. Must not therefore one be void of Reason to take a petty Pleasure in Hand, with such a Crowd of Troubles in

Reversion? Ought we not to fence against a Vice, so charming on the one Hand, and so uneasie on the other?

Neand. What are the best Preservatives against this Epidemical Distemper?

Euseb. Take this as a Principle, that Chastity is a Gift of God; and therefore implore continually his Divine Assistance; rely on his Grace, not on your Force; and if you be so happy, as not to fall, give him the Glory of the Triumph, and believe, that whosoever presumes on his own Valour, has already measured half the Precipice: God protects the Humble, and humbles the Proud.

Secondly, Keep Love at a Distance, or it will surprize you; when once it has stormed the Heart, it forces Reason to surrender; and when Appetite commands, when Passion domineers, what can be expected but Brutality? Lock up the Gates of your Senses, and, as in Frontier-Towns, examine the Passengers. Love, like a *Proteus*, borrows all Shapes, and makes its Approaches at all Seasons; so that you must stand upon your Guard, if you intend to avoid a Surprize; and if you can keep this Traitor at Arm's-length, Lewdness will neither have the Face, nor find the Opportunity to assail you. But if you admit this Tyrant, if you lodge him in your Breast, you will have Cause to de-

plore

plore your Slavery, and perchance eternally. For in a Word, Love, like a Viper, eats into the Heart, that warms it, and returns Death for the Favour.

Thirdly, Flight is the best Defence, the most secure Rampart against the Darts of Lasciviousness; you may as well hope to freeze in Fire, as to converse innocently in the midst of Occasions. I am of *Tertullian's* Opinion, that it's easier to die for Chastity, (as the World goes) than to live with it in *Balls, Visits and Entertainments*. And I look upon it as a certain Truth, that many of the Sex, who have surrender'd their Honour to the Flatteries, Importunities, and Dalliances of Gallants, would have refused it to the Cruelty of Hang-men.

Enter not therefore into the *Play-House*; it's the Palace of *Asmodæus*, the Seat of Lewdness, the Nursery of Debauchery. It's with us as the *Fornices* were at *Rome*, only with this Difference, that those Crimes are learn'd, contriv'd, and resolv'd on here, the *Romans* actually committed under the black Shade of those infernal Vaults. For my part I am of Opinion, that a Christian cannot with a safer Conscience enter into the *Play-House*, than into a Brothel; as things are managed there, Temptation is stronger on the Stage, and more inviting. The Blackness of the

Vice lies under a Disguise; it's blanch'd over with all the Art of Wit and Gawdry; so that nothing appears but the charming Part, which fascinates the Eyes, captivates the Ears, dozes the Intellect, and fires the Passions, and then to plain the Way for Action. The Poet burlesques the Terrors of the other World; he paints the Devils rather like Scharamouches to divert, than like Executio-
ners to torment: He blasphemers the Majes-
ty of God to bring him under Contempt, and so blunts all the Darts of Fear and Ap-
prehension; and then, when Objects draw, when Passions stand prepared, and Restraint is removed, what can be reasonably expect-
ed, but Prostitution?

But besides, the Stage not only removes Fear of Punishment, but even rewards Debauchery: For who are they that carry off Applause and Fortunes but Rakes and Prostitutes? The Poet puts all his Wit in the Mouths of Rooks and Bullies; and if an honest Man appear, he is sure to be hooted at, and generally goes off both Fool and Cuckold. Is not this to condemn Virtue? to execute it in Effigie? and to canonize Vice by Deputy? Is not this to say, Gentlemen and Ladies beware of Chastity and Virtue, they are out of Date in our Age; you'll forfeit your Honour by maintaining it, and grow ridiculous, if you continue

continue innocent. The shortest Way to Repute, is, to drive over Conscience, to blush at Honesty, and practise Incontinence. What Virtue is Proof against such murdering Engines? If Hell be a Place of Diversion, (as the Poets endeavour to persuade the Audience) if God be a Scare-crow, if Chastity be infamous, and Impurity creditable, who will not rather be lewd with Credit, than chaste with Reproach? I would have both Poets and Players enter a little into themselves; they have all contributed to run down Virtue and Religion, and to bring Libertinism and Atheism into Fashion. Those prepare the Pois'on, these present the Potion, dash'd with all the palatable Ingredients of Pomp and Magnificence, that it may go down with Pleasure, and work with Efficacy. I am afraid in the next World they'll be forc'd to answer for the Sins of the Poet and Actors, as well as for those of the Christian, unless by a timely Repentance, and publick Recantation, they ask Pardon of God, and Forgiveness of the Nation, which they have rymed almost out of Religion, and played out of Conscience.

Fourthly, When Temptation invites, draw up all the dismal Consequences of this wretched Sin, and fix your Thoughts upon 'em. Other Crimes, like the Adder, carry

their Poison in their Head ; this is a Scorpion, that licks up its Venom in its Tail. For though then Sin be charming, it's Sequels are dreadful. The Infection flies up to the Brain, like the Sting of the *Tarantula* ; and tho' those that are bit by this poisonous Insect, can dance out the stupifying Humour, and may be fidled into their Wits, the others are past Cure ; they remain in Spight of Homily and Exhortation, stupid, brutal, without Judgment, without Honour, without Sense, and oftentimes without Money ; but never without Folly, Sighs, Jealousies, Rage and Despair.

Fifthly, That your Affections may not steal abroad, nor like Butter-flies flutter from one Object to another, chain 'em by Lawful Wedlock to a Wife. I know at present, Matrimony (that in St. Paul's Days was honourable) lies under no creditable Circumstances ; and we are in part obliged to the Stage-Poets for the Aspersion. They represent this Divine Institution under all the Reproaches of Slavery and Folly, and paint both Sexes so scandalously lascivious, that the Character is enough to deter Christians from the Engagement I suppose these Gentlemen are fee'd by the Stews, to stand up for the Improvement of their Trade ; and for this Reason they labour so heartily, to persuade

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suade People, Lawful Pleasures taste flat and insipid, as if the only charming Circumstance of Pleasure were the Unlawfulness of the Action. This Doctrine is calculated exactly for the Practice of Lucifer and his Associates, but not for Christians: It smells of Smoak and may in good time heat the Preachers.

Beware of Jealousie. A Wife is often made faithful by not suspecting her of Infidelity; but when without Reason, you question her Loyalty; you only tempt her to betray it. I have heard of a Lady, that kept her Conjugal Vow, whilst her Husband thought she did; but when he accused her falsely, and blasted her Reputation, she murdered her Innocence to revenge the Injury. Some Women are of Opinion, there is little Difference between being unchaste, and being thought so; and therefore go off with the Satisfaction of Infidelity, as well as with the Infamy. A thousand, thousand times happy is that Couple, that by a wise Foresight prevents those Misfortunes, that spring from Diversity of Constitutions and Humours, or at least support with Patience, what Prudence can't avert, and so improve Necessity into a Virtue.

V.

If God has bless'd you with Children, (says the Scripture, *Prov. 7.*) instruct 'em.

H 4

God

God has ingrau'd this Law in the very Heart of Nature, and more than once promulg'd it in the Bible, that Parents might be well convinc'd of this grand Duty, and be persuaded to comply with it ; and yet it seems, that no Law is less understood, and more universally neglected in Practice than this. Some Parents, more cruel than the Ostrich, bring Poor Creatures into the World, and then abandon 'em. Others, like Apes, are so fond of their Brood, they kill 'em with Kindness : Those are guilty of Negligence, these of Indulgence ; and all betray their Duty, and by consequence their Conscience.

I have been often scandaliz'd at the insupportable Neglect of some Parents ; they made no Difference between their Laquays and their Children, but that they caref'd those, and eternally tormented these ; they herded with the Grooms and Carters, and owed all their Education to the Stable and Kitchen ; and if they sent 'em sometimes to School, 'twas only to rid the House, not for their Instruction. They never took the pains to inform themselves, whether the Master was black or white ? Whether religious or impious ? A Turk or a Christian ? Good God ! said I to Sir N. N. what do you mean ? You will not hire a *Cook* without examining

his

his Talents, nor take a *Groom* without Good Security of his Skill ; (yet the one is only to serve the Belly, the other to curry Horses) and will you trust a Child to the Care of a Man, who, for ought you know, has neither Science nor Religion ?

Nor have I beheld with Patience the doting Fondness of others. I have seen my Young Master often play the Lion in the Family, and my tender Lady, the Mother, applaud his Insolence, like the *Romans* in *Seneca's* Days. She would embrace the Spark, when she should have chid him ; nay, and kiss him for those very things she should have whipt him. To cross the Child, is to stab the Mother ; and if he whimpers, she cries in good Earnest ; his Passions grow upon him with Age, and a foolish Indulgence emboldens 'em ; he asks what he pleases, and obtains what he demands ; a refusal sets him on Fire, and then my Young *Jupiter* begins to thunder : My Lady trembles at the Tempest she has raised ; and instead of laying it by a sober Correction, she foolishly augments it by a thousand Careless : He is coach'd to Company, to Balls, and the Play-House, and must be Spectator of *Mama's* Vanity and Follies to learn 'em. Poor Sir *T. H.* saw this fine Manage, but was too dotingly fond of his Wife to save his Child. He complain'd one Day

to me, that his Son was fit for nothing, but either to dance or to quarrel. You are mi-
staken, said I, have a little Patience, and he'll retaliate his Breeding upon you with
Insolence and Outrage ; he is as handsomly
equipt for a Rake, as can be ; nor was I de-
ceived ; for since he flung himself away up-
on a Chamber-maid, dipt his Estate, per-
secuted his Mother, and brought his Father
with Grief and Chagrin to his Grave.

You must know, *Neander*, that Man by
Nature is half Beast ; he has all the Inclina-
tions, all the Passions of the most savage A-
nimal ; and (what is worse) he has Reason
to sharpen 'em, and Malice to abuse 'em.
But as the most fierce Lion is tamed and ren-
der'd tractable by Education and Discipline,
so Man may be taught Sweetness, Modera-
tion and Virtue, if he be taken in Hand be-
times, if his Passions are check'd, and forc'd
to obey the Commands of Reason, from the
Cradle. But when once Sense has got the
Upper-Hand, when Passion has tasted the
Sweetness of Superiority, and Reason is ac-
customed to Slavery, you may as soon sub-
due the Fierceness of a full-grown Tyger, as
persuade Sense and Appetite to resign the
usurp'd Government, or Reason to take
it, *Adolescens juxta vitam suam, & cum senue-
rit non recedet ab ea.* A young Man goes on

as

as he began, and carries the first Impression to the Grave. That you may not therefore cry one Day with the poor Eagle in the Fable, who being mortally wounded by an Arrow trimmed with her own Feathers, sighed out this melancholy Complaint, *Miserable Bird that I am!* What a Fool was I to bring forth Feathers to my own Destruction! I say, that you may not complain, those Children you gave Life to, are the Cause of your Death. Observe three things. First, So soon as they are capable to know God, teach 'em to fear his Justice and to love his Goodness; instruct 'em in Religion, and take Care they practise all the Duties of a Christian. A Child that fears God, will love his Parents; he can't be religious without being dutiful, inculcate a thousand times, that he is made for Heaven, and that he must live virtuously in this World, to be happy in the next: Precaution him against the Vanity of the World, and all its specious Scenes of Deceits and Pageantry, that delude the Eye to seduce the Heart: Discover the Danger before you expose him, and tell him with that admirable Queen *Blanca*, you had rather see him *in the Grave, than in Sin*: Inspire not into his tender Breast Desires of Grandure; this is a Seed that sprouts up without sowing: Choak all Tendency of so

early

early a Pride, or else it will grow to his Ruin. I blush at the unchristian Conduct of those Parents, who teach little Creatures, before they can walk, to climb up to the very Pinnacle of Honour; who would make 'em Pages to Antichrist to be great, and would counsel 'em to be *Mahometans* for the vain Satisfaction of seeing 'em Bassa's: When you have furnish'd 'em with Virtue, and provided for their Soul, let 'em think of a Settlement, and aim rather at a Post that is gentle, than great: An elevated Fortune is seldom obtained without vast Crimes, and always supported by greater.

Secondly, Cultivate them with those Arts and Sciences that suit with their Capacity and Condition. For those that have nothing to do, do always more than they ought; and though they are unfit for a handsom Occupation, they are capable of a vicious one.

Thirdly, Give not all your Means to the Eldest; leave a Provision for all: A young Gentleman that begins the World without Mony, ends it without Conscience: When I must rack my Brain to live, I have neither time nor leisure to think of living well. Necessity is the Mother of Vice, no less than Abundance; and Want is both more troublesome than Affluence, and equally dangerous: Besides, how will you have a Gentleman push forward, who

who has nothing to improve? Can he raise a Fortune without Tools to work with? without a Fund to lay the Foundation? Poverty palls the most generous Spirits; it cows Industry, and casts Resolution it self into Despair. When you have acquitted your self of these three Points, you have done the part of a Father; the rest you must leave to Providence, who watches over its Creatures, and never abandons those, who comply with their Duty.

VI.

Your Care must not stop at your Children, let it reach your menial Servants; though you are their Master, you are also their Father. And for this Reason the *Romans* call'd Housekeepers *Patres familias*, Fathers of the Household. Besides, as a Christian you are their Brother, and have the Church of Christ for your Common Mother; all these Relations deserve a Tenderness on the one side, and on the other impose an Obligation on you to enquire into their Behaviour, and to provide for their Instruction; don't so over-charge 'em with Labour, that they can find no time for God. You can't exact so continual a Service, nor is it in their power to comply with you. They owe more Obedience to God than to you; and you transgress your Duty, when your Commands cross upon his. Nor is it sufficient to allow 'em time to look into

into the Concerns of their Souls, you must see they employ it well : Let 'em meet at Prayers at least once a Day, and punish those that neglect this Duty. Suffer not in your House a Debauchee, though never so useful. Who is a Traitor to his Maker, will betray a Master at the first Occasion. A Man without Conscience is always without Honesty. Besides, Lewdness and Knavery are catching, and one infected Person suffices to scatter the Contagion. Take this for a Principle. The more you take to Heart God's Interest, the more he'll take Care of yours ; he'll crown your Enterprizes with Success, or raise your Soul above the Stroak of Misfortune. In fine, you'll either enjoy Prosperity with a Christian Moderation, or bear Adversity with Pleasure.

VII.

Confine not Charity within the Walls of your own House, nor employ it wholly about the Spiritual Good of your Neighbour ; let the Body feel the Effects of its Tenderness, as well as the Soul. When he groans under the Pangs of Poverty, and struggles with Necessity, relieve his Indigence out of your own Store-House ; let the Measure of your Charity be the Extent of your Ability and of his Want : What you lay out on the Poor, is not spent, but put to Interest ; God is Security for the Reimbursement, so that the

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Payment is infallible. I have seen some Gentlemen open-handed enough, but then they dispersed their Charities with so unhandsome a Grace, that, methought, they did ill in doing good, and refased an Alms whilst they gave one ; they seem'd to insult over a poor Creature's Misery, and seldom open'd their Purse, till they had vented their Gall. This is not to relieve the Indigent, but to throw Shame upon Want, and Confusion upon Necessity ; it's to hang Weight to their Burthen, and to fret Poverty with Contempt : Besides, it loses the very Nature of Alms ; for that is not received *gratis*, that is purchased with Blushes, and at the Expence of Patience. A compassionate Look oftentimes refreshes more, than a Crown with a severe one. And (methinks) I had rather be sent away with a civil *Gd be with you*, than be entertain'd with Peevishness and ill Nature. A small Favour well timed becomes considerable : The very manner of giving adds to the Gift. Keep not therefore the Poor at a Bay, nor rack 'em with Questions ; to what Purpose do these Preliminaries serve, but either to feed your Curiosity, or to spend a fretting Humour ? We are of the same Nature ; our Bodies are made of the same Clay, and our Souls by the same Hand. The Difference between the Rich and Poor comes

not

not from Nature or Merit, but from the Ordination of Providence. Some are born to no other Estate then that of their Brethrens Charity, that they may practise Patience ; and others to Abundance, that they may exercise Charity ; so that the Virtue of these stand indebted to the Misery of those ; and the Giver is no less oblig'd than the Receiver.

VIII.

Begin to practise the Virtues of a Christian betimes ; accustom your Palate to 'em before you have tasted Vice, they'll relish better ; a small Resolution plains the Way to Heaven in the Beginning, and turns Godliness into Pleasure ; but if you stay till Sins have flush't the Passions, and sharpen'd Appetite, nothing but Violence can secure you ; you will not be able to advance one Step without a Combat ; you must fight your Way through all the Squadrons ; the Flesh, the World, and the Devil will draw up to oppose you ; and when these Enemies are headed by vicious Habits, God knows, whether you will ever be so hardy, as even to attempt a Conquest so hazardous on the one side, and so laborious on the other.

IX

Indeed a Christian Behaviour among Gentlemen is so unusual, that you must venture to be out of Fashion, you must stand the Shock of

of Rallery, and perchance the Stroak of a Lampoon ; but these Weapons stick in the Skin, and although they are poust on withall the Violence of Malice and Profaneness, are not able to draw Blood, or to touch your Reputation. I have ofteu been astonish'd at some Gentlemen, who practised Virtue at Home, and Vice in Company ; who betray'd their Conscience to avoid a Blush. This is, said I, to fall into the wretched Blindness of some savage *Indians*, who adore the Devil, that he may do 'em no Harm. If Rakes glory in Evil, why should you be ashamed at Good ? *That* carries along its Condemnation, and *this* its Justification. Surely Shame sits more naturally on Guilt than Innocence.

But could we dive into a wicked Man's Heart, could we pierce into his Soul, we should read most visible Traces of Shame and Confusion ; every Moment he casts an Eye on his Vices and his Neighbour's Virtues. For let me tell you, *Neander*, Piety has an amiable Aspect, it charms its very Persecutors, and even those who stigmatize it in Practice, admire its Beauty. So that, though sometimes they let flie a Rallery, and shoot a Joke, these petty Arrows flie at random, and never come near your Honour: Nay, take it for a general Rule, that those Rakes, who flirt at a Christian Demeanour, have a secret Esteem for it.

Oh,

Oh, said one, I must draw in my Piety, and mew it within my own Walls ; I have almost lost my Christian Name, and am scarce known, but by that of *Bigot*. Pray, Sir, said I, let us not startle at Sounds, nor run away from Buffoons ; let us construe the Word, and frame right Notions, and then we shall find, that *Bigot* in the Jargon of Reprobates is nothing else but a Man that believes Religion, and dares profess it ; that boggles at Oaths, and blushes at Perjuries ; that will elevate his Spirits with old *Hock*, or new *Champagne*, but not drown his Reason ; that has not Courage to laugh at Hell, nor the Impudence to play upon Heaven ; that sometimes does good Actions, and always fears bad ones. This is the Highth of a *Bigot's* Devotion, according to the modern Use of the Word ; so that it imports nothing hurtful, nothing infamous, unless it be a Disgrace to profess Honesty upon Occasions, to practise Morality, and to have a good Conscience.

But let Debauches burlesque your Piety, must you abandon it ? Will you abjure Christianity, because some Libertines sport with Religion ? or commence Atheist, to humour Fools ? Why then will you be scared out of Piety, or teased out of Morality ? Is it honourable in Spight of Rallery to acknow-

/ edge

ledge a God ? and a Disgrace to serve him ? Is it a Credit to be a Christian, and a Shame to be a good one ? No certainly ; let us put things together, and act consequently ; let us call in Reason to govern Fancy.

Besides, who are these Men that awe us ? A Club of Animals, that have more Money than Wit, and more Quality than Conscience, a Pack of Hectors, that live ill, and judge worse ; that are pitied by some, and scorn'd by others ; the very Panegyricks of these Men are Satyrs, Praise out of their Mouths is scandalous, and Blame is glorious. *Neander*, suffer not your self to be laught out of Heaven, nor rallied into Hell ; if you can't bear the reproaching Frowns and Smiles of a Man, how will ye endure the Frowns of an angry Deity ? If the Lash of a pe-tulant Tongue be so sensible, assure your self the Pains of Fire and Brimstone will be more insup- portable. Virtue in a Dungeon is preferable to Sin on the Throne, and Innocence in the Pillo- ry is more honourable than Guilt on the Bench.

X.

If you love your Soul, and resolve to save it, avoid the Conversation of Libertines and Atheists ; like the Basilisk their Eyes dart Poison, and their Tongues speak Death ; they are Satan's Deputies, and Devils by Proxy. A Liber- tine is half Fiend, half Beast ; Pleasure is his *Summum Bonum* ; this he places in Sin like the Devil, and in Mire like the Swine ; he circles from

from the Tavern to the Play-House, from hence to the Stews, and returns to his Lodging the same Way; so that his whole Study is to learn Wickedness, and his whole Business to practise it; his Discourse is a Compound of Smut and Blasphemy; his Entertainment unchristian, and his Dialect diabolical; he would fain monopolize the Wit of the Nation, but wants both Fund and Patent; his Knowledge reaches no further than a Gazette or the Courant, and on Occasions he ventures to vent Nonsense in Meeter; his Religion is universal, calculated for all Meridians; he has one for a Calm, another for a Storm, one for *Europe*, another for *America*; so that it's as difficult to be defined as a *Disjunctive*; in *England* he stickles for his Bishops; in *Scotland* against 'em; he is a *Jew* at *Amsterdam*, a *Musselman* at *Constantinople*; a *Papist* at *Rome*, and a *Calvinist* at *Geneva*: In a Word, he is any thing without, and nothing within; so that his whole Religion turns upon Convenience and Interest, and is comprised in these Verses.

Quest. *What's Orthodox and true Believing.*

Against a Conscience? Ans. *A good Living.*

Quest. *What makes rebelling against Kings*

A good old Cause? Ans. *Administrings.*

Quest. *What makes all Doctrine plain and clear?*

Ans. *About two hundred Pound a Year.*

Quest. *And that which was proved true before
Prove false again?* Ans. *Two hundred more.*

XI.

An Atheist is an overgrown Libertine; and if we believe his own Genealogy, he is a *Byblow* begot by Hazard, and flung into the World by Necessity; he moves by Wheels, and has no more Soul than a Wind-mill; he is thrust on by Fate, and acts by meer Compulsion; he is no more Master of his Deeds than of his Being; and therefore is as constant to his Word as the Winds to the same Corner; so that an Atheist by his own Principles is a Knave *per se*, and an honest Man only *per Accidens*. In fine, he starts out of Dust and vanishes into nothing.

Neand. All my Concerns are in the Hand of a Man, who will not be very fond of this Character, yet he sets up for an Athiest, and supports the Fraternity with Arguments and Authority.

Euseb. *Neander*, discharge him out of Hand, he'll certainly ruin your Soul, and may possibly embezzle your Estate. A round Hurrican of Atoms may drive him into the Possessions of your Lands, and you out of 'em. A brisk Puff may convey out of fight a necessary Indenture, or raise high the Bill of Reparations; there is no coming near a Man with Safety, that's void of Conscience; no trusting him that acts by Fates, or moves by Destiny; if he be a Slave to impulse, he is not Master of his Honesty.

Neand. Though he abjures God, he upholds Reason, and keeps Touch with Probity; he values

lues Honour, and would forfeit Life to maintain it.

Euseb. Then he is made up of Contradictions, and one part of his Creed stabs the other ; if there be no God, your Friend is the Spawn of Casualtry ; the Child of Matter and Motion, a Heap of Dust with a Complex of Ubications, a Figure without Soul, a Statue without Life ; he is all Matter like Beasts, no more capable of Reason than an Ape, of Virtue than *Baalam's Ass*, or of Honour than *Caligula's Consul*. In fine, withdraw your Concerns, or you may one Day repent your Confidence : For I must once for all tell you, Honour without Conscience, without Religion, will yield to Interest.

Neand. This cannot be done so soon ; endeavour, I beseech you, to gain him ; overturn his Principles, and the Conquest will be easie ; you can't oblige him more than by entering into a Dispute ; and the shortest Way to win his Favour, is to quarrel with his Tenets.

Euseb. Disputes indeed are natural to Atheists ; for no Men maintain with greater Eagerness they are in the right, than those that suspect they are in the wrong ; like Men in a dangerous Road they love to travel in Company, and so draw in Profelytes to march to Hell with a Caravan.

But, *Neander*, this Itch of arguing is a terrible Argument, they are scared with Doubts, and haunted with Suspicions that God is no

Chymæra ;

Chymæra; it's a Sign that Conscience is uneasy, and makes some Attempts to break all the Barriers of Ignorance, Pride and Blasphemy.

However, I'll comply with your Desires, and wait upon the Gentleman, when you command me : Although I must tell you, a converted Atheist is a Phœnix scarce seen in an Age ; for he is a Mixture of Pride and Ignorance, of much Sense and little Reason ; he confutes Arguments with Laughter, and pretends to frown Demonstration it self into Sophistry. How can Truth (I do not say subdue) but even reach such a Man ? You may as soon fetch down the Moon with a Cannon-Ball, as convince him.

Neand. It's true ; but Charity armed with solid Reasons may perchance soften his Obstinacy ; and altho' you lose your Labour, you'll meet at least in the next World the Reward of your Zeal. I'll tell him you intend to make him a Visit.

Enseb. I am content, *Neander*, I have drawn a short Scheme of your Duty, and wish you so happy as to comply with it ; it will prove the best Support of this Life, and the greatest Comfort in the other. God has interwoven Man's Felicity with his Duty, and twisted his Interest with Pleasure. A Good Man is seldom uneasy, and an ill one is always unquiet ; one must be blind not to discover the Canker at his Heart through all the glittering

tering Pageantry of Greatness and Power ; he may rant and laugh, but can't be merry : For certainly their is a great Difference between Noise and Mirth ; their Lives are as unlike as their Ends ; and those are as different, as the Pains of the Damned are from the Joys of the Blessed.

“ *Neander* took Leave of *Eusebius*, with a
“ Promise to call upon him the next Morning.
“ He went immediately to *Theomachus*’s Lodg-
“ ings (this was the Atheist’s Name) he open-
“ ed freely his Design, and ask’d him, If Bu-
“ siness would permit him to enter upon a
“ Conference with *Eusebius*.

“ *Theomachus* received the Proposal with a
“ Transport of Joy, and told *Neander* he was
“ infinitely oblig’d to him, for offering so fair
“ an Occasion of making Acquaintance with a
“ Man so much talked of. For (continued he)
“ I have often heard great Commendations
“ both of his Virtue and Learning, and shall
“ by this Interview be able to judge, whether
“ his Merits equal his Fame. Besides the
“ Greatness of my Adversary will secure my
“ Credit, tho’ Fortune declare against me.
“ *Neander*, after some mutual Compliments,
“ returned to his Lodgings, with a Resolution
“ to mind *Theomachus* of his Promise the next
“ Morning.

F I N I S.



